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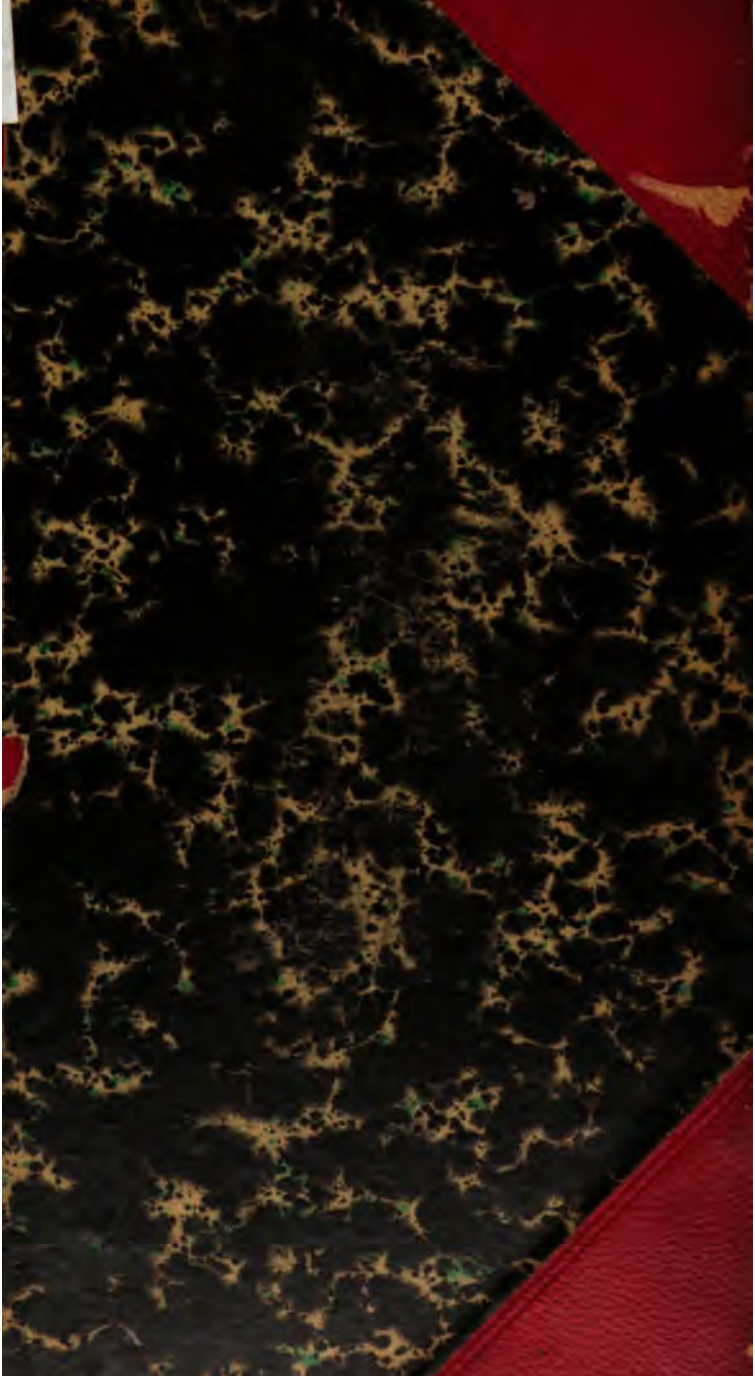

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RELIGION, A SUPERFLUITY OR A NECESSITY.

At the beginning of a church year or of my work as connected with it, I like, if I may, to strike some keynote, to deal with some fundamental problem, something that underlies the existence of the Church. So this morning I shall attempt an answer to the question as to whether religion is a superfluity in human life or a necessity of that life.

My text I have found in a few words in the fourth verse of the fourth chapter of the Gospel according to Matthew, — "Man shall not live by bread alone."

I wonder if I can even partly accomplish the task which I have set myself,— something I would very much like, if I may, to do. Can I make religion seem to you, immersed in the affairs of life, as real a thing as those affairs themselves? Can I make religion seem to you as real as your bank account, as the game of golf, as the theatre, as the novels you love to read, as the business blocks which in this great city overtop even the churches? Can I make religion appear thus real?

If I did not believe that religion was more real than these, and more important, I would never ask you to step inside a church again. Indeed, I would not step inside one again myself, either as preacher or listener, unless on some special occasion when I expected to be entertained by the speaker as I would be if I attended a lecture.

If religion is not a vital thing, then why feel about it, why trouble about it? If it is a superfluity, if it is a whim, if it is a tradition, if it is a luxury,— if it is simply a good enough sort of thing,— why not drop it, and give your en-

ergy, your money, your time, your effort, to something that is vital, something that will really lift up and lead on the world?

Before I come to discuss the question as to whether religion is thus vital, I wish to note certain principles which apply to all the higher and finer things of life. Let us, for the sake of illustration, glance at the human body for a moment. All the lower functions of the body, of human life, are automatic: they take care of themselves. I do not need to superintend the flow of the blood through arteries and veins. I do not need to watch the beating of my heart. I do not need to worry about the air in my lungs. Indeed, the more you think about these things, the more you fret about them, as a general thing, the worse off you are. The automatic side of the body will take care of itself better if you simply let it alone. You do not need to pay any attention to these things, except, of course, the common-sense attention of not hindering these functions by poor and careless ways of conducting yourself.

But when you come up a little higher than this, to the thought realm, to the feeling realm; when you come up to deal with the brain, how it shall think and what it shall think; when you consider the use of the hands, as to whether they shall be trained into skill or left to be clumsy; when you raise the question of the eye as seeing and the ear as hearing, as you must in music and in art,— when you enter on to the higher ranges of the human body, there you must take thought: there must be definite education, there must be training; and people must be trained into an appreciation of these things.

You do not need to argue with a man to make him understand that he needs bread. A natural sense of hunger will look out for that. But, when you come up to the question as to whether he needs art, music, or truth or love or conscience,— any of the higher things,— there you are in a realm where the automatic is not enough, where there must

be persuasion and definite attention given. And so, if you go beyond the limits of the human body, the human individual, and treat the race as a whole, you may be struck, if you have not given special attention to it, by the fact that the highest and best things are always in a tremendous minority. It is perfectly natural that they should be so.

In the light of the science of evolution, when we remember that man started on the borders of the animal world and is climbing up, slowly, into heart and conscience and brain and spirit, then you will see how natural a thing it is that, while the lower ranges of life can be left to take care of themselves, because they will assert their rights, in regard to these higher things there must be definite thought taken, there must be education, there must be training. And since it is only the few who do take thought, who are educated, who are trained in these matters, it is true that the highest and best things of the world are not cared for as yet by the vast majority of men and women.

If, for example, to-day the best things in literature, in art, in music, in architecture, in any department of life, were put up, their value to be decided by a show of hands, every single one of them would be voted down. They exist because a few people have learned to appreciate and care for them and are working for them, devoting their lives to them, educating the world slowly more and more into an understanding and appreciation of them.

So it is nothing against a thing that it does not have a majority vote in its favor. Indeed, a majority vote in favor of anything is a little suspicious as touching its real value. The world, or part of the world, in this republic, is indeed governed by the majority; and I heartily indorse the principle, and would fight for it. Yet that does not mean always that it is the best governed country by a long ways. It means simply that the people, whether they are very wise or not, have a right to say something as to how they shall be governed; and, if they do not choose wisely as yet, because

they have not learned any better, then we say they do not know any better and will learn by experience.

But a majority vote in favor of a religion or in favor of a bit of architecture or a work of art or music would, in the opinion of most experts, condemn it, and rightly so. The highest and best things are those that lead the world, lure it as ideals, things not yet attained, things towards which the civilized man is more and more reaching out, if he may by any possibility attain them.

In the light of this principle let us go back to where we started,— a consideration of religion and its standing at the present time.

I quoted to you last year a saying attributed, I know not whether rightly or wrongly, to Mr. Moody, to the effect that, of the seventy millions of people in this great country, not more than thirty millions ever enter any kind of a church. It is being debated on all hands, this matter of church attendance. It is said that people do not attend church as regularly or as generally as they did fifty or a hundred years ago. I find the New York papers since my coming to town during the past week engaged in discussing this matter.

Assuming that it is true, and trying to get at the reasons for it, of course the reasons offered depend upon the point of view of the man who is communicating with the newspaper, and are as various as the various writers. Even President Eliot of Harvard, in an address which he gave before the International Congregational Council, held recently in Boston, seemed to hold this as true,—that people do not attend church now as regularly as they used to. Now, if they do not, let us inquire just a little as to what it means.

Does it mean that religion is dying? Does it mean that religion is ceasing to hold with its old-time power the allegiance of the brains and the consciences and the hearts of men and women? If so, does that mean that religion is something that civilized man gradually outgrows, that is

something appertaining to the childhood, the superstitious, the myth-making epoch of the human race?

A great many secularists and agnostics will tell you so. They say just as soon as man gets rid of his superstitions he gets rid of his religion, which is one of them, and ceases to attend church. That is one explanation of the fact.

May it mean something else? That the ministers, the priests, and the churches having for a long period of time identified religion with certain forms, rites, ceremonies, and intellectual beliefs, these having ceased to hold the people, the people naturally infer that, since these and religion are one, as they have been taught, religion is passing away? It may possibly mean that, it seems to me.

And I offer this as another theory: that the intellectual ideas which have been associated with religion in the past — the rites, symbols, ceremonies, creeds — cease to satisfy the brain of the world; and, therefore, this particular type of religion is passing away.

It may be that the conception of God that has been taught mankind has come to seem unworthy. Men may find it impossible any longer to love that kind of being, to admire him, to worship him. I have heard people say — indeed, I have said it myself — that they could not admire that kind of character in a man. And I could never quite understand why I should admire something up in the sky for which I should only have indignant contempt if I met it on the street. Here, then, is another possible theory.

I think perhaps I need not tell you what my theory about it is. I believe that, if it is true that the people are not attending church so much as they used to, it is because the Church has ceased to represent to them something vital, something which they can believe, something that they can love, something that they can worship, something which seems to them worthy of their manhood and their womanhood. And, if this be the case, instead of this supposed decay of religion being a sign of the decadence of human

nature, it means an uplift and advance of human nature. It is no disgrace to a man to outgrow a partial and unworthy view of things, no matter how much it may have been reverenced in the past, provided he goes on to the admiration and acceptance of something that is better and finer.

Now I believe that the trouble is just here. Men may seek to conceal it as much as they please. Any man who dares to think and study carefully and freely does not question, he simply knows that there is no rational or scientific basis for the claims of the ecclesiastical traditions of the past. The man who dares to think and study a little knows perfectly well that this Bible, grand and noble as it is, is not an infallible book. He knows that the creeds of the great churches are not final statements of religious truth. He knows that, however much they may have served the world in their time, they do not square with the free scholarship of the present age, they do not represent the best thinking of the churches for which they still stand. Any man who chooses to study these things, and think, knows that there is no body of priests on the face of the earth who has any esoteric knowledge of God or of his ways. He knows that there is no church that has a monopoly of any divine revelation to be doled out according to the will of its authorities to meet the supposed needs of the people.

People no longer believe that God is an irresponsible despot. They no longer believe that he is going to send to eternal pain any honest man, or any dishonest man, for that matter. They can no longer hold such a conception of the Divine. Is it any wonder, then, if the statement be true, that the churches that hold to and still advocate these ideas are losing their hold, not on the masses, perhaps, not on the ignorant, not on the people who can be frightened, but on the people who think and who are brave and who dare,—that is, on the very best classes of the community? It would seem strange to me if these churches did not lose hold of this class of people.

But right in here is a danger. I said a moment ago that the Church and its advocates, its priests, its ministers, have been accustomed for a long time to associate certain rites and ceremonies and certain theological ideas with religion in such a way as to make an impression on people that they and religion were one. And there are thousands of people who do not think and study enough — absorbed, perhaps, in their worldly affairs, so that they cannot — to observe that this is an error.

I received a letter from a lawyer in the Far West a few years ago. He had seen an article of mine in one of the reviews, and was surprised to see "Rev." below what was written. He said, "I had thought myself out of the old ideas, and supposed that I had got myself out of religion; but, if this which you advocate can be called religion, then perhaps there is a religious home for me somewhere in the world." And he was glad to believe that it might be so. This, of course, is what I hold.

Just think for a moment. Our creeds are, perhaps, some of them, five hundred, some a thousand years old. They were formulated by earnest, passionate, very fallible men, before the character of the universe was known,— formulated in a little, tiny play-house of a Ptolemaic universe. God's government was shaped in the likeness of the despotisms of this world. But these theories, these creeds, are new, very parvenues. They do not represent the agelong thought of the universe. And is there any reason to suppose that they must be permanent, and that we must tremble for the existence of religion itself, because some of these are impeached, discredited, and thrown aside?

Why, if the world grows, these passing theological theories of religion must pass. The best ideas we have to-day will be outgrown in some far-away time, when the world learns a deeper knowledge of the universe and a higher and sweeter thought of God. Religion remains because it is the aspiration of the human heart, the uplift of the human soul towards God, an eternal aspiration, an eternal uplift.

What men think about religion, their theories about it, may be very partial and mistaken and pass away. But do not for one moment imagine that religion is endangered because theologies are destroyed. We have changed our theories of the stars over and over again since the shepherds on the Chaldean hills first began to watch their movements. Has the change of theories put any of the stars out? Do they shine with any less brilliancy to-day? Indeed, has not the universe expanded and become unspeakably more magnificent with the disparagement and doing away of the old and petty and childish theories, and the acceptance of the magnificent work of Copernicus and all those who have learned to read better the secret of God's wonderful work all around us?

Religion, then, is not in any danger: it is not going to pass away. This church and a good many other churches may get empty; but they will not be half as empty as the human hearts that still long for the religious life, and if empty it will be empty because they ought to be empty. Or they will be empty because people for the time being are not able clearly to comprehend what is taking place. But some other churches will fill up by and by; for religion is to go on conquering and to conquer to the end of time.

Now let me suggest, if I can, some reasons that will help, possibly, to make this great truth seem to you real.

What is the essence of religion? I have told you over and over again that there has never been but one religion in the world, and never can be. There have been a thousand different theories held about religion; but from the very beginning the human heart has been feeling after God, if haply it might find him, who is not far from every one of us. The human heart and the human brain have both been hunting after God, after the secret of life, after the meaning of the universe.

And right in there is the essence of religion. Every religion on the face of the earth has been somebody's attempt

to interpret this inevitable human search, to put into words this search for the secret of life. Every ceremony has been an attempt to set forth poetically some phase of this universal feeling. Man feels that he stands in some sort of relation to the Infinite Power manifested in the universe about him; and Herbert Spencer utters the last and deepest word of science when he tells us that this Power manifested in the universe around us is the same Power that wells up in ourselves under the form of consciousness.

Man has always felt this manifested relation between himself and this Power. And he has always called this Power, looked at in a fragmentary way, gods; looked at as a unit, God.

Religion, then, is the relation in which man stands to God; that is, a relation which he can never escape, a relation which he must always try to better. Take it on the plane of the material, and we talk about being accommodated, adapted to our environment; and that means prosperity on all physical planes. In other words, if we come into accordance with these forces in the physical range, we find prosperity. If we run ourselves against them, we find they destroy. So, if we come up above the physical, come into the mental, what does it mean? Coming into right relation with God, that is understanding the truth of things. That is what it means in the mental realm: it means life. On the affectional plane, what does it mean? It means to love lovely things and lovely people: it means life there, then. In the range of conscience, what does it mean? It means rightness, truth, caring for that which is right; life here again. Up in the spiritual, the highest, where exists what we call the soul, it means the recognition of kinship between us and the Infinite Father of life, getting into right relation with him spiritually. It means life here also.

Note that one reason for the tangible importance of religion is that from the lowest clear up to the highest, from the physical up to the mental, spiritual, æsthetic realms,

it means everywhere life. And just in so far as we get out of accord with the Divine, out of right relations with this Power that is all around us and in whom we live and move and have our being, just in so far we suffer, just in so far the best things in us atrophy and tend to decay and die.

Let us not think that these higher things are not real, because we cannot see them, because we cannot clutch them, because we cannot step on them. Science has taught us enough to make us appreciate that the greatest forces of this universe are invisible and intangible. The things you can put your foot on, the things you can grasp with your hand and look at with your eyes, are the things in flux, passing away like clouds dissolving in the blue. It is the invisible things, the intangible, the invisible Power that holds in its grasp the suns, systems, galaxies of the earth, swinging them in their eternal and beautiful order,— that moves the needle round to the north, and makes it possible to travel all over the globe. The love that binds together these little groups that make up what we call our homes, invisible, intangible again. All the sweetest, finest, most beautiful, most mighty things of the universe are invisible and intangible.

So, if religion be invisible and intangible, it only creates a tremendous presumption in favor of its being one of the eternal forces of the universe.

Religion is life. Let me call your attention to one other point. I have spoken of it since I came to the city once before; but I was talking to a friend who had heard me, and I found that it has not remained in her mind, even if it had ever found lodgment there.

You are not men and women until you become religious. I mean that literally. You may be religious, and so have climbed up into the height of your manhood and womanhood and not know it, because you call religion by some other name. There are lots of people who think they are very religious whose religion I do not estimate very highly.

There are lots of people who modestly think they are not religious at all who, I think, are very religious indeed, and, I believe, are very religious according to the true definition of that word. But you cannot be men and women until you have climbed up into the realm of life where religion has its home and sway.

Think and see how inevitable this is. If you are on a level of life that you can feed with bread and meat,— the bodily level,— you are not man: you are an animal with millions of other animals. If you come up into the affectional range, you have not proved your right to be men and women yet. What a wonderful saying, and significant, is that in the Gospel! "No man can show greater love than this, that a man shall lay down his life for his friends." But a bird will do that, a bear will do that, thousands of animals will do that. Then on the basis of love you cannot claim to have risen above the level of the animal. Your thought may have a wider range, and, when you get into abstract thought, you have without doubt transcended animal life; but animals think, animals reason, animals dream. So you are not quite so sure you are above the animal, merely because you have a brain and think.

The highest development of the moral is, of course, peculiar to man; but there are rudiments of moral life in the world below us. It is only, then, when you have come up into the realm of the ideal, that realm where people imagine and think of finer things than they ever saw, and try to create them,— into the realm of the beautiful and ideal, aspiring after something that is on where God leads, where spirit reigns supreme,— only when you get up there have you entered on the prerogative of your manhood. Only then can you claim rightly to say, I am a man, I am a woman.

Religion important, then? If being men and women is important, developing manhood and womanhood!

I referred a little while ago to our business blocks that even out-tower our church buildings. Did you ever think on

what is it that our commercial and business prosperity rests? What is it that makes the basis of our social order? What is it that makes the basis of our governmental peace? How is it you can travel over the world and trade with every people and build up your colossal fortunes? Do your banks, your warehouses, your business blocks, rest on nothing more solid than the rock of Manhattan Island? Look at Paris during the Commune. Something gave way for a time; and the city was in the hold of wild beasts; business blocks and business were destroyed, and Vendome columns and everything beautiful were at the mercy of a raging storm of human passion.

There is something, then, deeper than the rock of Manhattan, there is something mightier than your stone foundations, something taller than your tallest blocks, something more important than all these on which rest the things that you do care for and that you do think are important, even if you do not think much about religion. And what is it that these rest on? Religion in its widest and truest sense. It is trust between man and man, it is the development of conscience, it is care for the ideal, it is love for the beautiful, it is an appreciation of the high and fine things of the world. It is these mental, moral, spiritual qualities that are the essence of the religious life of the world. It is on these that rest your governmental, your social peace, your industrial prosperity, all your commercial relations; and you take these away, and your blocks will crumble and your credit be worthless round the world.

It is not because of our ships and armored cruisers, it is not because of our mighty brick and stone structures, that a bit of paper can command the payment from an utter stranger of anywhere from a hundred to a million dollars anywhere in the world: it is because of the mental, moral, spiritual qualities developed in man that these things can be accomplished.

All that you value then that is solid and hard rests on

these invisible, intangible spiritual principles, which are the very breath and life of religion.

There is one other thing that I can only hint at now, at the end. I find as I talk with business men, when they throw aside their outer crust, and I get at their hearts, when they care to be confidential with me, that they would really like to have something more than a little money in the bank or a comfortable pleasant home to live in; because they know the money in the bank is not quite safe, something may happen to it, because they know the home may be broken. They want something more than the books that they love to read: they want to feel that there is some meaning and purpose in life. The early world felt it was the sport of tremendous loveless, titanic powers, that played with human tears and heartaches. Do not thousands of men feel that way to-day? I was talking with a famous secularist inside of a year, and he said, "Nature, Nature that people talk about and say is so beautiful, Nature is a hag." And he preceded the word "hag" with another word that begins and ends with a d. "Nature is a hag, that does not care for sorrow, does not care for anybody's life or death, has no pity." No admiration for Nature from him; and, as he looked towards the skies, he had no confidence that there was anything there, either, that did care.

Tennyson, on the other hand, expresses the belief that there really is in human life one

> "Far-off divine event,
> To which the whole creation moves."

Pope, in his "Essay on Man," talks about life as a "mighty maze"; but he expresses the conviction that there is a plan in it. Now, if you take out this unifying thought of religion, then are we not the sport of titanic forces that do not care? Is there any other way of our getting a sense of unity in our life? Science has demonstrated unity in the universe. I believe that demonstration should be carried to the

inclusion of human life,—your life, my life, no matter how petty or small it may seem. I believe there is a purpose, an aim, in the universe, and that I — though no more than a tiny grain of sand on the seashore — am a part of it; and it helps me to stand on my feet strong in the midst of the play of these apparently contrary forces, to feel that there is something solid under me, to feel that, if I sink, the bottom of the ocean, as George MacDonald somewhere expresses it, is the hollow of God's hand; that, if I sink, as one of our American poets has expressed it, my bark only sinks to another sea. It makes me feel, as Campbell expresses it in the closing of his famous poem, the "Pleasures of Hope," that hope can smile even at the ruins of creation, and "light her torch at Nature's funeral pile."

I believe we need this religious confidence under our feet so as to help us feel that our lives mean something. If they do not mean anything, why should I care so much to be faithful, out of sight, in the little affairs? Why should I try to be true? Why should I try to spare the shedding of a human tear, to add a little to the joy of human life, if the whole thing is to be wiped out soon, nobody knows when, and all to be either ice, compared with which the pole itself is hot, or dissolve into star-dust floating once more in space, as science tells us it was at the beginning of things?

I want to believe, if I may rationally, that there is some purpose in the universe, and that my life is a part of some purpose.

And then, at the end, when I dream again, as I did the other night, or when that dream becomes real, and I am looking with eyes of expectancy out into the mist, conscious that I am dying, I want to believe, if I can, that there is a purpose even in that, that there is a life, infinite and eternal, in the universe, whose child I am, and that I can look into this mist expectant of a face to meet and welcome and cheer me.

I do not say now that this is demonstrated truth, though

I believe it to be. But, if you leave the signification and meaning and heart and purpose and power of religion out of life, then this great hope will fail, and we shall tread a desolate earth, struggling against calamities as we may, with little hope, with no cheer, and feeling that life is something thrust on to us by a mysterious Power, but perhaps hardly worth the keeping.

Have there been any suggestions that even tend towards making religion seem a real thing? If there have been, I do not ask you to come and hear me preach. I do not ask you to join this church, unless our ways accord with your intellectual convictions and the promptings of your heart; but I think I have a right to ask you not to think of religion as a temporary phase of human thought, that is passing away. I think I have a right to ask you to consider very carefully before you let any and all other phases and interests of human life absorb your attention, so that there is no place in it for religion. I think I have a right to ask you to find some place where you can work with your fellows in building up the grander, nobler, deeper, higher church that is to be built on the ruins of the shaken theologies of the present time.

Dear Father, we believe Thou art our Friend, our Lover, our Helper, and that we are in Thy hands; and we thank Thee that we may be permitted to trust Thee, and that we can have the magnificent privilege of helping Thee help on and help up mankind. Amen.

UNITARIAN CATECHISM

BY

M. J. SAVAGE

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY E. A. HORTON

Price, Paper, per	Copy	20 cents
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INTRODUCTION.

The preface by Mr. Savage gives the reasons, clearly and concisely, why a book like this is needed. It answers a great demand, and it will supply a serious deficiency. Having had the privilege of reading the contents very thoroughly, I gladly record my satisfaction in the character of the work, my hope of its wide acceptance and use, my appreciation of the author's motives in preparing it. The questions and answers allow of supplementing, of individual handling, of personal direction. It is not a hard-and-fast production. There is a large liberty of detail, explanation, and unfolding. The doctrinal positions are in accord with rational religion and liberal Christianity, the critical judgments are based on modern scholarship, and the great aim throughout is to assist an inquirer or pupil to a positive, permanent faith. If any one finds comments and criticisms which at first sight seem needless, let it be remembered that a Unitarian catechism must give reasons, point out errors, and trace causes: it cannot simply dogmatize. I am sure that in the true use of this book great gains will come to our Sunday-schools, to searchers after truth, to our cause.

EDWARD A. HORTON.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

This little Catechism has grown out of the needs of my own work. Fathers and mothers have said to me, "Our children are constantly asking us questions that we cannot answer." Perfectly natural! Their reading and study have not been such as to make them familiar with the results of critical scholarship. The great modern revolution of thought is bewildering. This is an attempt to make the path of ascertained truth a little plainer.

This is the call for help in the home. Besides this, a similar call has come from the Sunday-school. Multitudes of teachers have little time to ransack libraries and study large works. This is an attempt, then, to help them, by putting in their hands, in brief compass, the principal things believed by Unitarians concerning the greatest subject.

The list of reference books that follows the questions and answers will enable those who wish to do so to go more deeply into the topics suggested.

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Dr. De Costa, Bishop Potter, and the "Sun"

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DR. DE COSTA, BISHOP POTTER, AND THE "SUN."

I HAVE chosen three different passages as together making up my text. First, from the twelfth chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews, the twenty-seventh verse,—"And this word, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain." And then from the prophecy of Isaiah, the fortieth chapter and the eighth verse,—"The grass withereth, the flower fadeth; but the word of our God shall stand forever." And again from Luke, the twelfth chapter and the fifty-seventh verse,—that charter of freedom contained in the words of Jesus, "Why even of your own selves judge ye not what is right?"

If any one is here this morning expecting from me any personalities, he will be disappointed. I have taken my theme as I have, because at the present time Dr. De Costa, Bishop Potter, and a very able writer in the *Sun* represent a great crisis in the religious thought and the religious growth of America. They are to me only indices pointing out movements, tendencies. They are only telling which way the winds of God are blowing. And it is these great facts and tendencies of religious life with which I propose to deal, referring to these names only to save myself the trouble of prolonged description, because they indicate the facts which I would present.

Dr. De Costa I have not the pleasure and honor of personally knowing. I believe, however, that he is a noble, sincere, honest, consecrated clergyman; and I believe, furthermore,— let me say right here in passing,— that his position, as indicated in his famous letter to the bishop, is

logically impregnable. Grant his premises, and you must follow him and accept his conclusions. He is consistent from beginning to end; and I believe that he has followed his conscience in taking the step which has created so much discussion.

Again, let me say concerning the bishop I do know him, very slightly. Concerning him, also, I would say that I have no question as to his honor, his sincerity, his devotion to truth, as he sees it, to the Church, as he believes in it, and to God, as he understands his duty to God. I cannot say, however, concerning his attitude as I do concerning that of Dr. De Costa,—that I think it logically defensible. It is an illogical position. Grant the premises of the bishop, and I see no reasonable way for stopping where he stops. I shall indicate to you before I am through that I think Dr. De Costa is right when he says that the logical outcome of the bishop's position is Unitarianism, is liberty in religion, is rationalism in the noble use of that term. I do not make any charge against the bishop as being conscious of this inconsistency. I do not believe that he is. I would not for a moment be understood as saying I think he has any secret or covert leanings towards Unitarianism. I do not believe he has. I have no thought of putting in even the most distant, tenuous claim to religious relationship between the bishop and myself. He would resent the imputation that he was a Unitarian or that he was looking that way, and would do it honestly. And I would resent it on his behalf.

Again, let me say concerning the writer in the *Sun* I do not know who he is, not even his name. I feel certain that it is the same man who has been writing religious editorials in the *Sun* for the last two or three years. They are brilliant editorials. They are very able, they are clear, they are strong. And, again, I say concerning his position that it is logically impregnable. Given his principles, his assumptions,—only note, please, that they *are* assumptions,—and there is no stopping until you come to his conclusions.

So much for a characterization of my feeling concerning these three strong, clear, able, and, as I believe, honest men.

Now I wish to call your attention to the contents of Dr. De Costa's letter to the bishop, and which outline his reasons for leaving the ministry of the Episcopal Church. I did not bring that letter with me. It covered nearly a page in the *Herald* last Sunday. It would take too much time for me to read extracts from it. I shall be very careful, however, not to misrepresent it, but shall state so much of its position as the present discussion calls for, in my own words. I shall try to do it with perfect fairness.

Let me say, as precedent to this, that, during the last few years, themes which I have discussed in the pulpit have led me to note, with some freedom and quite at length, the tendencies in the Episcopal and other orthodox churches with which Dr. De Costa's letter deals. I have been charged with unfairness, with over-statement, with saying what was not true in making such statements as I have; but it leads me, I will confess, to note that Dr. De Costa makes statements concerning the heterodoxy of the Church, concerning the inroads made into the Church by modern thought, concerning the attitude of its clergy, as touching their sincerity, their consistency, at any rate, so much more sweeping, so much more emphatic, than any that I have ever dared to make that my criticisms concerning the present attitude of the orthodox churches of America seem mild by comparison.

Dr. De Costa tells us that he would have stayed in the Church if he could have believed there was any hope of its being reformed and saved to its ancient mission. But long years of acquaintance with the attitude of its bishops and its clergy and the people who sit in its pews have convinced him that its foundations are giving way, that it is caught in the whirl and swirl of the tide of modern thought, and is being swept from its moorings. He tells us that the

clergy will, undoubtedly, for years go on signing the articles, but that these lead chiefly to practical "perjury." That is his own word. He tells the bishop that he undoubtedly has the diocese with him. A majority of the clergy and the people who support him are on his side in the controversy. He even goes so far as to say that he thinks a majority of the House of Bishops is on his side. That is, a majority of the Episcopal Church, according to this statement, has given up any ground for claiming that it is of divine appointment or has any divine mission to fulfil in the world. He says they have accepted almost unanimously the Higher Criticism.

I wonder if there are not a good many people here who, if they were sitting by a friend quietly, would not like to ask what the Higher Criticism is. Let me say, in just a word, the Lower Criticism, as it is called by way of comparison, is the criticism of texts, of words, as to what they mean, as to the teaching of particular passages in the Bible. The Higher Criticism, as it is called, raises the question as to the authorship and authenticity of the books of the Bible themselves. That is what the Higher Criticism means. And those who believe in the Higher Criticism believe that they have a perfect right in regard to the Book of Exodus, for example, to raise the question as to when it was written, where it was written, by whom it was written, if possible to find out, and, as a result, the question of its authority, as to whether it is the infallible revelation, supernatural and divine, of God, just as it stands. The raising and settling of questions like these are the work of the Higher Criticism.

And let me note, by way of passing, that there is not a single one of the higher critics,— that is, of the men who have devoted themselves freely and purely in a scholarly way to these questions,— not one who believes in the absolute inerrancy of the Bible, as we have it. And right in here, as you will see, is the force of the charge which Dr. De Costa makes; for, when you once admit that there is a single

mistake in the Bible anywhere, then it becomes a mere question of the critics to decide as to what particular book or chapter or passage is the word of God or a revelation from God. And, you see at once, it is a question to be bandied about among the schools, to be discussed like any other question; and certainty is gone.

Dr. De Costa says it; and he is right. The minute you treat the Bible as literature, and raise the question as to whether there is a mistake in it anywhere, that minute you have no absolute, supernatural, miraculously authenticated divine revelation left in the Book, or, if you have, nobody knows where it is. And the moment you grant that, do you not see that all the superstructure of the Church, which for centuries has rested on this supernatural and divinely authenticated claim, must be shaken, must topple, must be liable to fall?

The Church — that which has claimed to be "the Church," divinely organized and inspired for two thousand years, or nearly that — rests on this particular claim; and without it the Church becomes only a voluntary organization to teach and inspire and lift up and help on the world. It does not remain the sole depositary of an infallible truth for the salvation of man.

Dr. De Costa is right; and he says — and I believe that he says truly — that the majority of the Episcopal Church has given up this position. I believe the great majority of many of the other churches has also given it up; for the condition of the Episcopal Church is not isolated. The Congregationalists, the Baptists, the Presbyterians, all the other great churches, are substantially in the same position. That is, these ideas, these thoughts, are "in the air"; and the Episcopal Church has not been infected by them and set apart, like an isolated ward in a hospital. The germs of this disease, if it be a disease, or the seeds of this higher and grander life, if it be a higher and grander life, are in every soil, and borne on every wind throughout the civilized world.

Here, then, is the charge of Dr. De Costa against the Church, and the reason why he must leave it. He says it can no longer exercise an infallible function as teaching God's truth and as saving human souls.

Now concerning this great question — what is happening? What is the cause of all this? Preliminary to this I want to note one or two negative points.

Is the Episcopal Church worse as a church than it was a hundred years ago or two hundred years ago? Are there less noble men and women in it? Are there less noble men in its pulpits? Is there less consecration to truth, less consecration to human helpfulness and service, less care for the worship of God? If Dr. De Costa's charge be true, that the Episcopal Church is false to God, and is turning away from God's truth, why then, logically, the people in it ought to be worse people than they used to be. The ministers ought to be worse ministers, the men and women worse; but, as a matter of fact,— and I challenge the contradiction of the world to this statement,— the churches never began to be so fine, so high, so noble, so sweet, so pure, so intellectual, so clear-headed, so consecrated to God and his truth, so ready to help their fellow-men, as they are at this moment.

There is one church here in this city which I will single out for a moment, not because it stands alone, but because, perhaps on account of its exceptional opportunities and the exceptional wealth at its disposal, it may be allowed to stand the first among many brethren. I refer to St. Bartholomew's Church, under the leadership of Dr. Greer. There did not exist a church within all Christendom, until within the last hundred years, and perhaps I may rightly say fifty years, that in all its existence ever began to be so magnificently equipped and so magnificently consecrated to God and his truth and the service of the world as is that church at this hour. It is doing grand work for humanity. But, say Dr. De Costa and the critic in the *Sun*, it has surrendered its peculiar and divinely appointed work of saving souls in the

next world from hell, and is only engaged in helping people in this world now. That is the charge made over and over again. I leave it for the moment.

What about the other churches? There never was a time when the other churches — the Congregationalist, the Baptist, the Presbyterian, the Methodist — were doing so much good as they are now. There never was a time when there were nobler men in their pulpits, nobler men and women in their pews. There never was a time when they were so consecrating themselves to help on mankind as they are now.

Is the world getting worse? If the world is deliberately — as these men are saying — turning away from God, turning their back on his one source of light, why then the world ought to be a good deal worse off than it used to be. If turning away from God and his truth and being false and heretical makes humanity better, there is a terrible premium on heresy.

As a matter of fact,— and again I challenge the question or contradiction of the world,— never since the morning stars sang together were there so many pure and sweet and noble homes as there are to-day, never so many honest men, never so many loving and consecrated mothers, never so much education, never so many rich men devoted to philanthropic aims and efforts, never so much honesty in business, never so much purity in politics, never such cleanness in the different branches of government,— I am saying now take the world over and as a whole. The world in every direction never reached such a high-water level as marks its position to-day. And, priests and teachers, if you wish to commit yourselves to the statement that this coincides with a deliberate turning the back on God and his truth, then so much the worse for your claims.

What is it really that has been happening? What is the cause of this condition in the Episcopal Church and in the other orthodox churches? Why, just let us think for a

moment, friends,—let me resume and sum up in as brief space as possible what it is that has been taking place.

Until Copernicus, about four hundred years ago, the world had held what sort of ideas about the universe? Why, ideas that everybody knows now were petty and childish, the best they had, because it was a child-world, and they had not made any of the great discoveries that have signified and glorified this modern time. The universe was a little, tiny, playhouse affair. The world was in the centre, solid and fixed, stars were lights like candles hung overhead. Copernicus made his great discovery; and the blue spaces stretched off into infinity. Newton made his great discovery; and the forces were revealed which hold and swing the stars in their beautiful order, the planets and the moons. Then came Darwin, and made his wonderful discovery.

And the little tradition of the creation, instead of being inspired and given to Moses, was found to be not even what Colonel Ingersoll called one of the "mistakes of Moses." Moses never heard of it. It was hundreds of years after Moses' time. It was not even Hebrew: it was borrowed from the Babylonians and the Persians, only a few hundred years before Christ. This little story as to how the world was made in six days has become beautiful tradition, taking its place among other childish stories of the origin of things; and now we know that God never created the world and finished it. God is in the most distant star, the light from which takes millions of years to reach us. He is in the grass-blade at our feet, working here. Creation is process, always in process, never completed. We have our modern magnificent universe; and we have a new man, not created six thousand years ago, but two or three hundred thousand years ago, beginning to grow, as all life has grown, from the beginning up to the highest; and in man leading to God, lifting him towards God at every step.

We have found out that the Bible is simply the religious

literature of one people, and that there are a dozen other Bibles held to be infallibly inspired with just as much reason as this one. We have found out a different origin of man, so that we know he never fell.

Why, what has happened, friends, is simply that a great new revelation of God has come to the modern world, antiquating all the ideas that have been consecrated in the creeds that were the product of the world's childhood and ignorance. The world has become wiser: that is all that has happened. It has found out that these things are not true. That destroys no truth: it simply discovered that they never were true. We have examined the traditions of the Church; and we find that there is no ground for believing that these traditions are infallible; rather good ground for believing the contrary. We have studied the origin of the Bible, and have found out how it has come to be what it is. And every critic and scholar, and every intelligent reader, knows that the authorship of most of the books we know absolutely nothing about.

That does not touch any of the great truths which the Bible contains; but it does touch the authority of the book as a whole.

Now we have been finding out these things. We have got a new universe, a new conception of God, a new thought about the origin and nature of man. We know about church tradition, we know about the origin of the Church, we know what its claims are worth, on what they are based, and that they are not based on anything like infallibility,—based on human ambition, on the contests and conquests of bishops in their rivalries one with another. These things we have found out, and these things the people in the pews are learning; and that is one reason why they are losing faith in the ministers, and do not care to go to church any more, possibly. I give that as a suggestion. The ministers are learning these things, and whispering them one to another. Dr. De Costa says in the Episcopal Church they are

talking about these things among themselves. He knows this is true of them.

A Presbyterian clergyman tells me these things about the Presbyterian Church. A Congregationalist clergyman tells me them of his Church. Why, everybody who takes pains to know is aware that this doubt of the old claims, born of a deeper knowledge, is everywhere; and there is no possibility of hiding it much longer or keeping it out. What does this mean? What is it to come to? Now let us face the fact: what is to be the result of it?

It is going to destroy, beyond any question, the authoritative claims of the Church: it is going to destroy that. It is going to destroy the dogmatic scheme of salvation; that is, the doctrine of the Fall of Man, of the Infallibility of the Bible, of Miracles, of Total Depravity, the Vicarious Atonement, the Immaculate Conception and special and limited incarnation in the person of Jesus of Nazareth, the doctrine of Eternal Damnation for those who are bad, and of Paradise only for those who accept this scheme.

This scheme of things,— why, there is no question that it must go. It is absolutely discredited among those who care to think and make themselves acquainted with the facts.

Now consider for a moment, friends. Is this such a calamity? Do we need to go into mourning about it? Would you have it otherwise if you could choose? I do not believe there is a man in the city of New York who, if he should stop dispassionately and quietly and think a little, would not be glad to have these things given up. At any rate, I am ready to say that I should be heartily ashamed of him if he wouldn't be glad.

Would you like to keep,— and now I am not talking about their truth especially,— just suppose you could have your choice: would you like to keep the doctrine of the Fall of man? Would you like to believe that every man since the world began was born under the curse of Almighty God?

Would you like to believe, as the Episcopal Prayer Book still teaches, that an unbaptized infant goes to eternal torment? Would you like to believe that God either could not or would not forgive anybody, even if they wanted to be forgiven, until he killed his own Son as a substitute? Would you like to believe that the great majority of the race from the beginning of all time is now wailing, without one gleam of hope, in the darkness and grime of hell? Would you like to believe these things? That is the question, not Are they true? If you could have your choice, you would not like to believe them. You are too humane, too decent for that. You would not for an hour uselessly torture a dog, though he had bit you. Would you torture forever one of your own children? or, if you would not, do you believe that God is so much worse than you are that he would, and not only torture one of them, but the great majority of them forever? Would you like, then, to believe these things?

I can't, for the life of me, consider it a calamity, even if modern knowledge does discredit such teachings as these. And I will go farther. I do not ask you to join me in this; but I think most of you would if you stopped and thought about it. I would rather believe that death is the end of me, and that my pain ceases forever, and the pain of everybody else ceases forever when they die,— I would rather believe that, infinitely rather, than believe in any heaven that anybody ever pictured, for myself and my friends, with thousands of poor fellows shut out into the outer dark, where there is wailing and gnashing of teeth forever and ever. I would not have a great deal of respect for anybody who would be willing to take heaven on those terms; and I would not take it if I had my choice.

So what is it that Dr. De Costa and the writer in the *Sun* are trying to raise such an alarm about? The worst that is happening is the death of these horrible beliefs; and infinitely better than they is no belief at all. That is my judgment. That is the worst thing that is happening. And I

believe that something inspiring and magnificent beyond any words is happening, too.

Let us see if Christianity is in danger. Of course, from Dr. De Costa's point of view, it is, because Christianity is identical in his mind with this scheme of dogma. Of course, Christianity is being destroyed from the point of view of the *Sun* editorial writer, because he also holds that Christianity and these dogmas are one and the same.

But now let us see. I have been asked a great many times if, since I became a Unitarian, I considered myself a Christian. I have sometimes answered, merely to put the matter clearly before the minds of people, If you will find me six men belonging to six different denominations who will agree as to what Christianity is, I will tell you whether I am that or not. I have never found these six men.

For example, let us note the Greek Church, which claims to be older than Rome, because Constantine, the first Christian Emperor, lived in Constantinople, and the Greek Church was organized there. They look upon the papacy as parvenus, upstarts, heretics: they have nothing but curses for all Catholics; and the Greek Church is one of the largest churches in the world. The Catholic Church, on the other hand, looks upon the Anglican Church and the American Episcopal Church as little upstarts: it does not give them any right to claim that they belong to the Church of Christ. Meanwhile the Anglican and the Episcopal Church claim to be *the* Church, and look upon Congregationalists, Presbyterians, Methodists, and Baptists as parvenus and upstarts, and with no right to be Christians. And all these look upon us poor Unitarians as parvenus and upstarts and having no right to the name of Christian. One of the hardest things in the world that I have ever tried to do is to get a definition of the word "Christian" that half a dozen people would accept.

Now Christianity, in my judgment, must be substantially one of two things: it is either this scheme of doctrine which

has grown up around the person of the Christ or it must consist essentially in the teachings of the Christ himself. Now everybody who cares to study knows that the creeds, the oldest of them, of the Catholic and the Episcopal Churches, are comparatively young; that is, they are a good deal later than the Christ. The Apostles' Creed does not take us nearer than four or five hundred years to Jesus; the Athanasian Creed belongs in the ninth century; the Nicene, to the fifth or sixth.

The doctrines that make up this scheme of dogma which Dr. De Costa and the writer in the *Sun* think are essential to the Church grew up in a process of speculation covering several hundreds of years. Jesus did not teach them. Jesus did not teach any of them. Jesus never taught any Trinity; he never taught any Vicarious Atonement; he never taught any Fall of Man or Total Depravity of the race. These horrible doctrines are not the teachings of Jesus.

I believe in that Christianity which constitutes the essential teaching of the Nazarene, and not human devices and philosophical speculations on the nature and origin of the Nazarene. That kind of Christianity the world can lose, and be the better for it. The Christianity that is essential in the teaching of Jesus himself was never so strong. That is not dying: it is embodying itself deeper in the heart of the world. The love, the tenderness, the trust of the Father for the race; the kindliness, the outlook for the future,—these are growing; and these are the teachings of Jesus.

Christianity, then, as I know it, is in no danger. Modern criticism and scholarship are simply clearing away these things, so that we may find the Christ.

I think I used an illustration here once which flashes into my mind this moment, and which sets forth my idea: There was discovered not a very great while ago a portrait of Dante. It was on the wall of a building. It had been covered up with soot, whitewashed, hidden away; and by and by it was found that it was there, and the loving hands

of critic artists took away, fragment by fragment and particle by particle, the accumulations of dust and dirt, and Dante looked forth again the immortal that he was.

And so these critics, that people are so afraid of, are simply removing the dust and grime and dirt, the misconception of the ages that have covered up the Christ; and we are coming back to see the glory of God shining in his face as the world never saw it before. This, friends, is what is going on.

Now I am going to take advantage of this present opportunity to say a word or two about Unitarianism.

One of Dr. De Costa's grave charges against the Episcopal Church is that it is honeycombed with Unitarianism, that the trouble started in that direction, and that there is no stopping it. I believe it. I do not mean to say that these men are consciously Unitarians. I do say that the studies in which they are engaged, if they keep on, will lead them to our position. Our position do I say? I do not like the word: it sounds like standing still. Everything in God's universe is on the move. Unitarianism is a movement, a method; and we appeal for freedom of thought and scholarship, because we know that freedom in thought and scholarship will lead us to the truth; and the truth is God.

Why has not Unitarianism as an organized body made greater advances? The *Sun* tells us that it is not relatively so strong in Boston even as it was a few years ago. I think that statement ought to be modified. I think it is stronger in Boston than it was a few years ago, when you regard the native population of Boston, the only kind of people there to whom Unitarianism appeals. It happens that the great majority of the population of Boston is foreign and Catholic. Relatively, then, to the people it is stronger in Boston.

The *Sun* says it is weaker in New York than it was awhile ago. I do not care to discuss that question. I wish to note the attitude of Unitarianism at the present time, not the reason for it.

This same editorial writer says — and I thank him for that — that the great leaders of Unitarianism have not cared to create a sect. Channing fought all his life against creating another denomination. He thought there were too many already in Christendom. What he wanted was to spread the light and the truth as he believed it, and to let it permeate the whole world.

Martineau, the greatest name in the liberal thought of England during the present century, has always taken the same position as against sectarianism, against establishing a denomination. That is one reason why we have not more churches,— because the greatest of our leaders have all been against sectarianism.

There is another reason, which will appear like a Hibernicism when I state it: The reason that there are not more Unitarian churches in America to-day is because there is so much Unitarianism. Unitarianism is being preached now from Presbyterian, Methodist, Congregational, and Episcopal pulpits everywhere. Dean Stanley said, when he visited this country a few years ago, that he had listened to a great many sermons in all the great denominations, but that Emerson was the preacher in every one of them.

Edward Everett Hale has said in Washington, during the last week, at our National Conference, that our gospel is being ably preached in many of the other pulpits of the country. I could pick you out a hundred towns and cities in this country to-day where it would be hopeless to try to establish a Unitarian church. Why? Because the other churches are brimful and running over with Unitarianism. What is the use, the people say, of our being branded with an unpopular name? What is the use of our spending time and effort in getting a particular label over a church door, when we get all we want as it is? Our ministers are preaching more Unitarianism than the Unitarians. And it is often true.

I do not mean to boast. Unitarianism has not done all this. I do not plume myself on this at all. It is God who

has done it: it is the new light and the new religious life and the new uplift. I might as well go down to the harbor in a little yacht, and think that because I am leading all the other yachts are being moved by me. We are all on God's great ocean tide; and, if Unitarianism has any advantage over the other denominations, it is simply because it has been the avowed policy of Unitarianism to keep its eyes open for God's next sunrise, and its arms outspread to embrace any messenger that comes from God with his truth. That is the only advantage Unitarianism claims.

Unitarianism is in all the air. I do not want people to think that I am calling ministers by names which do not belong to them. I have in mind a minister of a Congregationalist church who is an avowed Universalist. He does not believe in the infallibility of the Bible; and he says so. His attitude is not according to the old ideas of the Church at all; and his belief in the divinity of Christ is what the old Unitarians would have rejoiced in. If I am not quite satisfied with him as he is, I do not want him called a Unitarian.

I shall wait until these people get ready to label themselves. I shall not put any label on them that they do not like. I object to anybody labelling me; and I will not label anybody else.

Now, at the end, one great question faces us. The editorial writer of the *Sun* says — and Dr. De Costa agrees with him — that, in order to save what they believe to be Christianity and religion, there must be an absolute, inspired, divine revelation, and that the minute rationalism begins to question or creep in, that minute the fatal work of disintegration has begun. Now I wish you would give me your clear and sharp attention for a moment, because I wish to establish a dilemma that ought to be in the mind of every citizen of New York in contemplating this question. Now think,— is this Bible an infallible, divine, miraculous revelation, or is it not? Take the question as applied to that.

Dr. De Costa and the writer in the *Sun* say that, if we do not accept that position, we have no right to believe in God, that we have no right to believe in any future life. They have told us, one or the other of them, or both, within a week, that the acceptance of the central doctrines of Christianity by reason is impossible, that, judged by reason, they are absurd, and cannot be accepted, and that the only ground for accepting them is absolute authority.

Now think for a moment, friends, where we are. This is the gist of the whole matter. If I accept the Bible as infallible, I do it, first, for a reason; or, secondly, without a reason. I must do it one way or the other. I must do it for a reason or without a reason. If I do it for a reason, I bring the Bible into the court of reason; and Reason sits on the bench, and decides that it is or is not infallible. So Reason is the final arbiter; and, in accepting the Bible as infallible, Dr. De Costa, the editorial writer in the *Sun*, the pope himself, each of these is, and must be, a rationalist, provided, as I said, that either of them accepts this statement for a reason.

If they accept it without a reason, then where are they? You might just as well accept the Koran or the Book of the Mormon or the Veda, or any other book in the world; because the minute that reason is out of court *there is no reason left* for anything, no reason why one thing is any better than another; because, by the very hypothesis we are dealing with, reason is out of court.

Oh, it is so unfortunate that God should have endowed his human child with brains! Brains, according to these people who are mourning the situation of affairs in this nineteenth century, turn people against God, his Bible, against truth, righteousness. Brains are sending millions of people to hell; for all the people who think and study freely are coming to substantially the same conclusions, and they are all hopelessly doomed. If God had not given us any brains, then we might have accepted the verdict of the Church, we might have been saved. It is a great mistake, it seems to

me, to have given us such troublesome, aspiring endowments as these minds of ours.

But you must face the problem. You must either accept authority and give up thinking or you must think and trust God and follow his lead, one of the two.

We are coming now, on the eve of the twentieth century, to the parting of the ways. I have been saying for many years that I believed ultimately we must come to the choice between the two R's, Rome or Reason. The minute you admit the principle of study, of criticism, of brains, that moment you admit the supremacy of reason as the arbiter of truth. Surrender brains, give up the use of your mind, and you can bow to the absolute authority of men, the study of whom proves to be very fallible indeed.

Instead, then, of apologizing for Unitarianism as we enter on this twentieth century, I lift up its standard as the religious leader of the intelligence, the thought, the philosophy, the science, of the world. I believe that Unitarianism stands in a position to be arbiter, and cry, "We hold the keys." Not that God has miraculously given us any keys that we have the exclusive use of, either to bind or loose, to shut in or out; but that we dare take and use the keys of freedom, the keys of knowledge, the keys of faith, and so the keys of the life that now is as well as of that which is to come.

We believe in God, we believe in the divineness of his universe; we believe in man, we believe in truth, we believe in the conquest of man over this world; we believe in the progressive and eternal salvation of all men in the life everlasting; and we invite all those who are not ready to stop thinking to join with us in saving the next century from infidelity and secularism, and lifting it up into the light and joy of a noble and world-wide reasonable and reverent religion.

Dear Father, we thank Thee that we may help in so grand a work as this; and we ask Thy guidance and inspiration in bringing it to a noble conclusion. Amen.

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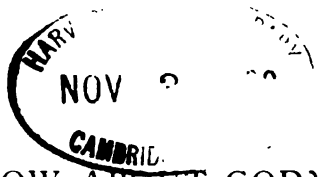

WHAT CAN WE KNOW ABOUT GOD?

My text I take from the first chapter of the Epistle of Saint Paul to the Romans, the twentieth verse,— "For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse."

Man's supremest need is his need of God; for, without him, what? We look around us on every hand, from the surface of this little planet, speeding with inconceivable velocity on its viewless track; and we see everywhere forces that, as compared with our pettiness and weakness, are omnipotent. We are in the midst of the play of these forces, and over them we have little control.

Now, if the forces of this universe are against us, if they are not on the side of those things for which we chiefly care as men and women, then do you not see how hopeless is any noble effort on our part? If the universe be against us, why should we try, why should we care, why should we like caged eagles beat our wings, until they are bloody, against the unfeeling bars of the inevitable? If the universe be not positively against us, if it be only careless, if it be only unfeeling, indifferent, then, again, what can we do? Why should there ever again be a martyr? Why should there ever again be unselfish effort of one life to make itself do the highest and sweetest and finest things for another? It is all in vain, or would be, on that supposition.

The Stoics, indeed, without much faith in any overruling power, were able to lead noble lives; but they simply did so without any aspiration, without any mainspring of con-

tinuous power, without any uplift of hope. They were merely saying, Whether the gods care or not, I am going to try to be true to my ideal of manhood.

But, after all, man's supremest need is his need of God. For, if we may believe that there is an order, a plan, in all this mysterious maze; if we may believe that there is a heart, a consciousness, an intelligence, at the centre of the universe; and if we may believe that this heart, this consciousness, this intelligence, is on the side of the noblest and best and sweetest things, and that we can co-operate with it and so accomplish something,— then life takes on a new and higher aspect. It is worth while to live. It is worth while to die; for one dies only into an immortal existence, and one is defeated only as the first step towards an inevitable triumph.

We need God, then, more than we need anything else in the world. But can we find him, can we know anything about him? Mark one thing, and mark it if you please with a great deal of care. We are being told at the present time on every hand that there is no use in our trying to find out anything about God unless we have an absolutely infallible and supernatural revelation; that reason and human experience are hopeless, and that there is no use of our making the attempt.

I suppose these people who believe in absolute infallibility believe that the Book of Romans is a part of that infallibility. And yet it is rather unfortunate for them that the author of the Book of Romans should directly and squarely and flatly contradict their own assertions. They tell us that we cannot know anything about God by means of his universe. But Paul tells us that the invisible things of God from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that God made,— that is, through nature and humanity,— even his eternal power and Godhead.

Now note: whatever touches me, and so comes in con-

tact with me, I can deal with and know as an object of knowledge; and the same thing of course is true of everybody else. Whatever touches men, then, becomes an object of knowledge. Does God touch us? Paul again says in another place, "In him we live and move and have our being." God, then, according to Paul, is our natural, eternal, inevitable, unescapable environment. He touches us constantly on every hand all the time, and always has been touching men from the beginning, and must until the end.

If God is away off somewhere in the deeps of space, if he has built this world as a carpenter builds a house and has gone off and left it, and if he has not been here to do anything in particular about it for two thousand years, why, on that presumption, it might be difficult for us to know him. But if he is here now, and always has been here, and has always been coming in contact with us, always been touching us on the right hand and on the left, always "besetting us behind and before," as an Old Testament writer has it, why, then, we can know him, and know him by the method of science.

Let us see then. The fundamental quality of a living thing, that which distinguishes it from a dead thing, is that it is capable of feeling and reacting when it is touched. That is what we mean by a thing being alive. You touch a living thing, and it feels and will respond. You touch a dead thing, and you get no response and no indication of feeling.

Now man from the beginning of the world — and here is the fundamental thought which I wish you to take to your hearts — has been feeling the presence of an invisible world, has been feeling the impact of a life all about him, from the very lowest savages up. This has been the one thing, the great thing that has characterized the world always and more universally than any other conceivable thing,— man has been feeling that he was surrounded by a spiritual environment. He has, as was inevitable, interpreted this in a

polytheistic way. He has talked about spirits and gods, because intellectually he had not risen to the possibility of conceiving even the unity of things. It was no universe in the childhood period of the world. It was simply a great chaotic confusion of forces that man could not comprehend, and to his understanding frequently clashing in contradiction and aimless warfare.

It was gods, then, thousands and millions of them, on every hand. But how have we changed as the ages have gone by? We have simply dropped the *s*, that is all. It is not "gods" any longer, but simply God. But this feeling, this consciousness that I spoke of a minute ago, is just as dominant — yes, a thousand times more dominant — to-day than it was at the beginning of things. All the seers, all the poets, have given utterance to it. The old Psalmist felt that presence, and declared that it was impossible to escape it. He said: If I go up into the heavens, it will be there. If I go down into the deeps of the underworld, it will be there. If I fly to the uttermost parts of the earth, it will be there. If I hide in the dark, the dark is light about me. He felt so about it.

Let us note one or two of the expressions of modern psalmists, seers, poets. I take one of the most casual that come to me. Byron, not usually classed as a religious writer, says: —

> "There is a pleasure in the pathless woods;
> There is a rapture on the lonely shore;
> There is society, where none intrudes,
> By the deep sea, and music in its roar:
> I love not Man the less, but Nature more,
> For these our interviews, in which I still
> And all I may be or have been of yore
> Do mingle with the universe, and feel
> What I can ne'er express, yet cannot all conceal."

And he says again in another line,—

> "To me high mountains are" —

What? Piles of dirt?

"To me high mountains are a feeling."

And Wordsworth, in that finest expression ever given in all literature to this thought, and so in danger of being trite by the frequency of its quotation, says: —

"I have felt a presence that disturbs me with
The joy of elevated thought,—
A sense sublime
Of something far more deeply interfused,
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
And the round ocean, and the living air,
And the blue sky, and in the mind of man,—
A motion and a spirit, that impels
All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
And rolls through all things."

And another poet, speaking of a mountain that he loved, says: —

"When I look on Ossipee,
Not alone the hill I see;
Not the hill I see to-day,
Fair and large and distant gray,
But a mountain richly bright,
Shining with eternal light.
. . . . . .
I shall never know the day
When thy touch has passed away;
For thy spirit, Ossipee,
Has become a part of me."

And again,—

"Even in the city I
Am ever conscious of the sky."

So the poets everywhere have given expression to this feeling of the spiritual environment manifested in the flowers that bloom and the stars that shine, in the winds that whisper and the waves that talk to us in their eternal prattle upon the seashore. Now does this mean anything? Is this only tradition, poetry, fancy?

I come now for a few moments to place my feet on the solid substratum of scientific fact. I wish you to note that, though I ask it of you as a task, I ask you to think with me for a little. I ask you to note that I assume absolutely nothing, and that every step I take is in consonance with scientific demonstration. Let us see if it leads us anywhere. Of course, my line of thought must be followed very rapidly. I have not time to carry it out in full, nor you patience or strength to listen, if I had. This is the first step: —

When man wakes up to consciousness of himself, he becomes conscious of himself because at the same moment he becomes conscious of something that is not himself,— the power, not himself, manifested in the universe around him. He turns and looks at this power that is not himself; and what does he find? He finds that it is a power that was here before he was born, a power that will be here after he dies. He finds it is a power that on any definition of it you choose to make is his Father. It has begotten him, produced him. It is a power that has brought him here. He tries to note some of the characteristics of that power. He looks on this external universe and discovers everywhere order,— order, mark you, not disorder, not chaos,— everywhere, so far as the mind of man can lift or sink or travel, absolute order of the most marvellous and intricate kind. Order in the galaxies, order in the invisible particles, molecules, atoms, of the invisible world beneath.

The next step: it is an intelligible order, an order which he can trace, an order which he can understand so far as his brain power enables him to grasp it. So that it is pure science. When Kepler, the great astronomer, says after he discovered the laws of planetary motion, "O Father, I think again thy thoughts over after thee," he traces the thought that finds its expression in the universe as intelligible order, and so an intelligent order. Such it must appear to us to be.

What next? He notes the fact that this power mani-

fested in the universe is one power. So science echoes back the saying of the old Hebrew seer, "The Lord our God is one." All science is unitarian. Every intelligent step that the world takes forward is towards unity. We have found out that the substance that glows in the burning flame of the most distant sun, that is so far away it takes thousands of years for it to reach us, is the same substance that we are treading under our feet. One matter, one force, one life,—no longer a chaos, but a universe. We have demonstrated, then, the unity of this power. I have already said on any theory you choose to adopt that we must look to that power as being our Father.

It is interesting, then, in the next place, to raise the question as to whether this power is matter or spirit. Is it material or spiritual? I confess to you frankly that I am not particularly interested in the answer to this question. I do not know what matter is, to start with; and I have never heard of anybody who did. I do not know what spirit is; and I have never heard of anybody who did know. I confess to you that it does not trouble me at all when some man—as frequently did the late Colonel Ingersoll—puts to me what he regards as a "poser," thus: Do you believe that God existed alone in the universe for countless ages, and then suddenly waked up and created something, made matter out of nothing? No, I believe nothing of the sort. It is just as easy for me to imagine this material universe as self-existent and eternal as for me to believe God to be self-existent and eternal. I cannot possibly think of or comprehend either of them; and I do not care to take the trouble. The gist of the matter to my mind does not lie there at all.

I believe that this which we call "matter" is the eternal expression of God, of the divine life, and is just as eternal as is God. I do not dogmatize about it, for I do not know; but it seems to me the more reasonable supposition. The gist of the matter, it seems to me, is not which comes first, but what is the nature of the power manifested in this

universe. If you can prove to me that "dead" matter, the matter that we find in a brick or a bit of marble, under some mysterious transformation comes to have the power to live, to think, to feel, to love, to hope, to sacrifice itself for another bit, to aspire, to look onward towards the immortal life,— if you can prove to me that matter can do that, you have simply changed your definition of matter, and made it coincide with what I call spirit. That is all you have done; and you can take your choice. You have turned matter into a God, that is all, if you find it capable of doing all those things; and I shall let you take either horn of that dilemma which you please, while I go on to say that this power manifested in the universe, which is one, is what we call — what I mean when I say — spirit, without my undertaking to define just what that is.

Herbert Spencer has uttered the last, highest, deepest word that science has to say on the subject when he says, — what I told you the other day,— that the power which is manifested in the universe around us is the same power which wells up in us under the form of consciousness. Here, again, he reasserts what I just uttered a moment ago, — that this power is of identical nature with ourselves, and is our Father.

The old materialism is become utterly discredited, not because priests have disliked it and churches have fought against it. Science itself has done what the metaphysicians and the ministers have never been able to do. It has probed the universe so deep as to make it absurd for any man to hold the old materialistic theories any longer. They are absolutely discredited, they are gone by. A man like John Fiske, for example, tells us they are bad philosophy and bad science, and that they are utterly out of court. The power then manifested in this universe is what we mean when we call it "spirit." It is one power. It is alive.

Now let us raise the question of personality. Is there a

personal God in this universe? If you mean by that — and a great many times people quarrel when, if they would stop to start with a common definition, they would find they were in substantial agreement — the childish idea which I had when a boy, that there is a being outlined and sitting on a throne somewhere in the universe, if I could only get to him — a personal God in that sense,— why, then, I suppose no sensible person believes in that to-day. But is God personal? I have told you before that I believe in God as I believe in nothing else; for, again, Herbert Spencer is the mouthpiece, and the most authoritative mouthpiece, of modern science, when he tells us that the existence of this eternal power back of all phenomena, and of which phenomena are merely changing manifestations, is the one most certain item of all human knowledge. It is the one thing we know as we know nothing else.

Now is this God personal? What is the essence of personality? What do we mean by it? I am a person not because I am outlined in body. I am a person because I can think and say "I." The essence of personality is consciousness, self-consciousness. In that sense I believe in the personality of God.

I had a long talk a good many years ago with Mr. Herbert Spencer about this subject, anxious to know his ideas. And he told me before it was published, what has since become a part of one of his books, that, when he doubted or denied the personality of God or the consciousness of God, he did not mean that this power was something less or lower than consciousness and personality, but it was something that transcended these, more than we can mean by these terms. So that this power is not less than personality, not less than consciousness. It may be, for aught we know, all that and something as yet inconceivable to us because of our lack of spiritual and intellectual development.

But God is personal, and God is conscious, and God can

love; and all these sweet things that we love to associate with our religious and spiritual life,— these are in him; for they have come out of him. They are personal manifestations of him. You might as well deny that a ray of light comes from the sun as to deny that these things which make up the essence of the highest and finest things in human life have come out of the heart and the thought of God. We stand related to this universe, whatever else be true, in some sense as a coin stands related to the die. You pick up a coin; and, whether you ever saw the die in your life, you know that every mark, every indentation, every elevation, on this coin, has something corresponding in the die that stamped it. Now here is personality, here is soul, here is love, here is aspiration, the power of self-sacrifice and devotion, the highest, finest, sweetest things in man; and they are the result of the stamping of the infinite die that has shaped us what we are.

God, then, is a person. Now the next step: is he good? We could not love him, we could not worship him, he could not be what we mean by Father, unless we believed in his goodness. There are many charges brought against the possibility of God's goodness. I will mention one or two, and indicate to you what I believe is a satisfactory and conclusive reply. It would take me all the morning to deal with any one of these departments by itself, if I undertook to go into detail.

It is said that God cannot be good because there is pain in the world. I could prove to you, if I had an hour in which to do it, that all the necessary pain in the world is one of the greatest possible proofs of the divine love and care. Any race of creatures that could not feel pain, placed on this planet, would be wiped out of existence in three months. Pain is absolutely necessary to continued existence and growth and learning and development.

But you have no business to charge against the goodness of God the pain that is caused by your own carelessness,

by your own selfishness, by your own ignorance, your own wilfulness, your malice in your relations towards each other. The necessary pain of the world, then, is a token not of divine hate, but of divine love.

Take again the question of life's dissatisfactions. None of us reaches that which he desires. Life is incomplete; and that is brought as a charge against God. People say, "If I were God, I would make everybody happy." By making everybody happy in one moment, in the sense of being perfectly content, you have created a sot's or a fool's paradise. The restlessness that is not content means simply the eternal promise of infinite advance.

Again it is said that moral evil is a proof that there is no good God controlling the destinies of this scene of human life. If you will stop and think for one moment, long enough to comprehend the problem involved, it will become perfectly clear to you that God could not possibly create a perfect being in a minute if he tried. For it is not a question of omnipotent power. What we mean by being a good man or a good women is one that has learned to be good by experience and built up self-control. That is what we mean by it. It is a contradiction in terms to mean something else by it. There could be no possibility, then, of our growing into the likeness of God except by outgrowing imperfections and evils; and, when we turn away from the Babylonian importation into Hebrew of the childhood story of the garden, and read the story that science has demonstrated beyond all question to be true, and trace the origin of man, his ascent from the lower forms of life, we get a perfectly natural scientific explanation of man's imperfections. He is outgrowing the tiger, the bear, the serpent, the wolf, the fox, the hyena. He is sloughing off the lower, and climbing up into his manhood, the sonship of God. That is the very problem we are working out here on this planet.

And the other great charge made against the goodness of God is death. If death be the end, then it is an irrefut-

able charge against either the wisdom or the goodness of God; but a man has no right to urge that as a charge against God's goodness until he can prove beyond any question that death is the end. So long as I have a hope that it is not the end, so long I can meet his charge against the goodness of God; and, when I have — as I believe we are on the eve of having — certainty, then death simply opens the gate of our little world and makes us citizens of the universe, and is the best, last, highest gift of God, permitting us to go on and up forever.

I believe, then, that we can come very near to a scientific demonstration of the goodness of God, that he is our Father, spirit, conscious, personal, loving, and that he is so good that our hearts should respond ever in gratitude, in rational gratitude and joy.

But where is he? One of the papers during the last week has asked me that question, as though unanswerable. The God you talk about, that does not have an infallible, supernatural basis for belief in him, where is he? How do you know anything about him? He is everywhere. He is in the stars overhead, in the grass-blade under foot. He is in men, not only in Christians, but in pagans. Not since the beginning of the world has he left himself without a witness. He has always been everywhere,— in every smile, in every hope, in every heart, in every aspiration, in every act of sacrifice and every consecration to that which is noble, in all the good which has lifted the world. God is everywhere. The universe, so to speak, we may regard as his body. We may say of him in part, as Pope expresses it: —

> "Warms in the sun, refreshes in the breeze,
> Glows in the stars and blossoms in the trees,
> Lives in all life, extends through all extent,
> Spreads undivided, operates unspent."

The centre of the divine life is here; and he who dwells on the farthest planet in the deeps of space can say, the

centre is there. The centre is anywhere where there is a soul feeling and a mind thinking and a heart loving; and the circumference is nowhere, for there is no bound to be set to infinity.

But is all this so mysterious that it makes God nothing at all? In two or three Sundays I am going to preach a sermon which I think will help remedy this defect, if it be a defect. I have one in my heart and mind. But, as an illustration, infinitely inadequate, of course,— but to help clear this difficulty in trying to apprehend God,— I do not talk about comprehending, mind you: apprehend is to take hold of, comprehend is to take hold of and include,— as illustrating this and showing that it is not a difficulty peculiar to our effort to understand God, let me use an illustration which I have used before.

In this regard, God is not one whit more mysterious than I am, than you are. I say "I" for the purposes of my illustration, because it is easier. Nobody in all the world ever saw me. Nobody ever will see me, in this world or any other. I am invisible, as invisible as God is. I am as intangible as God is. What have you seen of me? You have seen my hands. They are not the ones I had, they tell me, seven years ago; though I have not noticed them change. You have seen my clothes — different ones, perhaps, every month, just as God is constantly changing his robes of sunlight and cloud and blue sky. You have seen the outline of a form supposed to be under the clothes; and that is all you know about seeing me. You never saw me, you never heard me, you have never touched me: you never will. I am not only invisible and intangible; but, so far as my body is concerned, I am omnipresent. Can you locate me in my body, my hand, my brain, my feet? Where am I? I know I am here somewhere on this platform; but I cannot locate myself. When I walk, I am, for all practical purposes, in my feet. When I grasp your hand, I am in the clasp that tells you of the feeling in my heart. When I speak, I am

in this invisible air that shapes itself to sound, to intelligible utterance. When I write, I am at the point of my pen, giving expression through purely artificial characters that can be read by those who understand what they mean. For practical purposes I am all wherever my activity is centred for the moment.

Is there anything more mysterious about God than that? God is the heart, thought, life, of this universe. You may, if you choose, speak of the world as his body — only remembering that this is only a figure and does not express the total reality of things. And if someone chooses to question as to whether the Divine can think, and say that there must be a brain in order to thought, let me use the audacious illustration,— which did not originate with me, but I believe with Martineau, one of the profoundest thinkers of his generation,— that the stars, themselves, considering their size, are as near together as the atoms that constitute my brain. And, if you say there must be a brain, let this thrilling dance of stars be the molecules and atoms that make up the brain of the Divine.

I believe that thought and love and power do exist at the heart of things; and under the inspiring guidance and uplift of this power the universe is going on from animal to angel, from low to high, from ignorance to wisdom, from selfishness to the unselfish life, to all that is noble and divine.

And this power, my Father, is so near to me that the old dreams of the Old Testament and the dreams of the New together, which we have outgrown, which placed God in heaven, have so passed by that even our ministers are changing the phrase in the Lord's Prayer, and are saying, "Our Father which art in heaven" — and on earth.

God is coming nearer to us instead of being put farther away. "In him we live and move and have our being." He is as near to us as is the air we breathe. Take those beautiful lines of Tennyson: —

"Speak to him, thou, for he hears,
And spirit with spirit may meet;
Closer is he than breathing,
And nearer than hands and feet."

And if you ask me where he is, once more let me answer in two little verses, which I wrote some years ago, and on which to-day I cannot improve, as suggesting an answer to that question,—

"Where is God?"

"Oh, where is the sea?" the fishes cried,
As they swam the crystal clearness through;
"We have heard from of old of the ocean's tide,
And we long to look on the waters blue.
The wise ones speak of the infinite sea.
Oh, who can tell us if such there be?"

The lark flew up in the morning bright,
And sung and balanced on sunny wings;
And this was its song: "I see the light,
I look o'er the world of beautiful things;
But, flying and singing everywhere,
In vain I have searched to find the air."

Father, Thou art all around us; and, when we attempt to fly from Thee, Thou art the wings. When we would question of Thee, Thou art the very air that we stir with our inquiry. Thou art the life of our life, the heart of our heart, the hope of our hope, and the promise of all our dream and desire. We thank Thee that Thou art all this and more, and that we can trust and follow Thee forever. Amen.

UNITARIAN CATECHISM

BY

M. J. SAVAGE

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY E. A. HORTON

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INTRODUCTION.

The preface by Mr. Savage gives the reasons, clearly and concisely, why a book like this is needed. It answers a great demand, and it will supply a serious deficiency. Having had the privilege of reading the contents very thoroughly, I gladly record my satisfaction in the character of the work, my hope of its wide acceptance and use, my appreciation of the author's motives in preparing it. The questions and answers allow of supplementing, of individual handling, of personal direction. It is not a hard-and-fast production. There is a large liberty of detail, explanation, and unfolding. The doctrinal positions are in accord with rational religion and liberal Christianity, the critical judgments are based on modern scholarship, and the great aim throughout is to assist an inquirer or pupil to a positive, permanent faith. If any one finds comments and criticisms which at first sight seem needless, let it be remembered that a Unitarian catechism must give reasons, point out errors, and trace causes: it cannot simply dogmatize. I am sure that in the true use of this book great gains will come to our Sunday-schools, to searchers after truth, to our cause.

EDWARD A. HORTON.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

This little Catechism has grown out of the needs of my own work. Fathers and mothers have said to me, "Our children are constantly asking us questions that we cannot answer." Perfectly natural! Their reading and study have not been such as to make them familiar with the results of critical scholarship. The great modern revolution of thought is bewildering. This is an attempt to make the path of ascertained truth a little plainer.

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The Psalm of the Autumn Leaf

BY

Rev. ROBERT COLLYER

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THE PSALM OF THE AUTUMN LEAF.

"We all do fade as a leaf."— Isa. lxiv. 6.

These words of the prophet are also a sermon to which we listen when the trees hang out their banners of crimson and gold and the leaves begin to rustle under our feet. I heard it in my youth in the sycamores that stood close to my home in the old mother land, and was listening to it the other day in the elms and maples that stand about the home of my grandchildren in this new world and time; and for those moments the burden was the same in my age as in my youth, that the fading and falling leaf is the mute monitor of our human life, the type of our decay and our dissolution, as the spring-time, when the leaves break forth, and the blossoms, is the type of our resurrection from the dead.

And I can well imagine how my musings and memories may answer well to yours, in pensive moments, when you also are aware of the touch of sadness which answers to the prophet's monody. And may note also how this seems to the overmastering mood of the seers and singers wherever we turn, when they touch this symbol of the fading and the falling leaf, as the type of our human existence. It is almost always a moan and monody, seldom a sermon or song which hold in their heart any strong and cheerful note of accomplishment and victory.

We all rejoice with a great joy over the purple grape and the golden grain, while the ruddy apple seems to laugh at us on the trees; but the leaf shivering in the early frosts and then falling about our feet seems to whisper only

of decay and death. And we thank God, in our great Thanksgiving, when barn and storehouse bulge with plenty, — thank God, then, I say, for the kindly fruits of the earth, but have no thanksgiving for the kindly leaves. "How strange and awful the gusty winds and whirling leaves of the autumnal day!" Coleridge cries; and he does but echo your thought and mine when this mood of the prophet's monody touches us. We set his words in the copy-books for our children to inscribe at once on the paper and on the tablets of their hearts. We set them to music to be sung in our churches, and engrave them on the memorials of our dead. "We all do fade as a leaf."

So the truth stands; but, if it was the whole truth, or most noble, I should have no word I should care to speak or you to hear this morning. So I may say frankly that it is not my purpose to dwell on the thought I have touched, because these sad moods caught from the symbol of the falling leaf belong, shall I say, not to the gospel, but the law which is also holy, just, and good, when the hollow winds moan through the trees, and we sing

"The melancholy days have come, the saddest of the year."

So, while we may say the words of the prophet are true and the voices we hear in the woods are true, this question still waits for an answer, How are they true? Is this fading and falling leaf the only thing worth my thought, and that thought a sad one? May there not be something nobler and better in the symbol I can take to my heart as these fall days touch the fringes of the winter, and

"Chill November's surly blasts
Lay fields and forests bare,"—

something nobler and better than this monody of dissolution and decay in the very heart of my poor withered leaf?

For is not this true? First of all, my leaf can say, and

does say to me, that I must take care I do not go astray in my premise, and so fail to see what it is for me to fade and fall. Take care, the small thing whispers, that you do not make this of the greatest which may be of the smallest consequence, and that your steady gaze at this moment in my being does not shut out at once reflection and anticipation touching what I have been and what I may be by the law of my nature, which must be one with the providence of the Most High. It is true, as you say, that I am faded and fallen; but this is the true time for me to fall, as the May days were the true time for me to spring, and you must not doubt that the true time must be the good time for me to die as it was to be born.

And then I want you to tell me whether I am not now, in my own rank and degree, a perfect fruit and ripe for the harvest, as surely as your grapes are, your apples, or your corn, and so whether this you see at your feet is not in perfect poise and harmony with the whole ingathering of your harvest, and the proof that, poor thing as I am, I have also done the will of Him that sent me through the sunshine and the shadow, and won the Well done!

Your trouble is this, my tiny monitor whispers to me again, that you look at a leaf as you are so apt, many of you, to look at your life,— along the surfaces rather than into the deepness; and so your estimate of me is by superficies, and not by cube measure.

I seem to fall. I do fall. But, if it were possible for you to see what I do besides, what wonders would open when you saw, as in a glass, how that which has been the life of my life since I came forth, as it is of yours, is rising, not as in a fable, but, in deed and in truth, to be once more as it pleases Him in whom all fulness dwells, a servant and a minister of His grace! So this tabernacle, this poor thing shivering down to your feet, does not die, as it did not live, in vain. Did you rejoice this summer over the wealth of your gardens and orchards, your lowlands and uplands, and

fail to remember how for thousands of ages we have fallen as we do now, and have lain treasured on the mother earth, waiting for our resurrection in the treasures of the harvest home, so that the innermost secret of the harvest lies, after all, with the faded and fallen leaf?

So, while you preach from the prophet's word, "We all do fade as a leaf," why do you not take heart of grace sometimes and preach from the words of the seer, "The leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations"? For what nation is not healed through our ministry, and what great thing was ever done where we cast no shadow? You say and sing, Nothing but leaves, and think you have touched the dusty heart of all barrenness; but, when you know what it is to be what we are now, there will be a nobler music in your sermons and songs. It is true we are nothing but leaves; yet this also is true that, in the order of the creation, you had been nothing but for what we have done. Here, as everywhere, there is no bad or broken link in the chain that binds all the Eternal One has made fast to His throne, no step lost from the ladder which stretches from earth to heaven, no dry and worthless sand-bank in the river of life, because from the atom to the angel it is true that in Him we live and move and have our being, and He is not far from every one of us.

And, again, if my leaf may testify, it will say: Indeed, I was a mere leaf on the tree, waiting for the sun and frost to give the signal for my dissolution. I have had to bear the heavy rains, to wrestle with the storms, to shiver in the electric fires, to fight my way and hold my own in the teeth of foes and parasites ever since I budded forth from my tree.

But this I can say, as I fall, that there has been no day since I began to breathe the air of the blessed heavens when I have not stood true to the law of my life as a mediator bridging the chasm between senseless matter and the sentient soul. So I was saying, You are glad for your fruit;

and I repeat, If there had been no leaf, there could have been no fruit and there would be no tree. The servant of all, I am, in my degree, the greatest of all by the law of good service. I work through all weathers for your ships, your factories, your homes, your schools and churches. I am the match for your fire and the mast for your great merchantman. I brace myself and stand shoulder to shoulder on the great pines, keeping watch and ward in the long winter, to fend you from the awful northern storms; and we spread ourselves as a shield to shelter you from the burning summer fires. We cover the springs among the moss, and weave our tapestry to adorn the bare desolation of the mountains. We hold ourselves simple and separate always to our primal purpose, and say, This one thing we do for the world's salvation.

And now in my falling I shall still fall for blessing, and cease to be what I am because I have fulfilled the holy purpose. But, in ceasing to be what I am, I may well remind you of what one grand seer has said, who loves us and takes us to his heart: "We compare ourselves to leaves. They may well scorn the comparison if we live only for ourselves. And, if ever in the autumn a sad thought steals over us as the leaves flutter down in their fading, may we not well look up to their mighty monuments? And, as we see how fair they are, how far prolonged in arch and aisle in the avenues of the valleys and the fringes of the hills, so stately, so eternal, the joy of man, the comfort of all living creatures, and the glory of the earth, remember that these are but the monuments of the leaves that faintly flit down to die. Let them not die before we read and understand their holy revelation, so that we also, careless of a monument for the grave, may build one in the world by which men will be taught to remember not where we died, but where we lived."

And, keeping still to its lesson, my leaf whispers: You can think as you will about your human life and lot as you fade and fall, make all this as mournful as you please, and dis-

honor death by evil names and imaginations as the shadows fall upon you; but I ask you, once for all, to leave us out of your monodies and analogies. I protest against being counted as one that shudders at dissolution and decay. I have had my day, I have done my work; and now, as I fall from the spray where God caused me to spring, the falling seems as good and true as ever did the springing. And there is another word I want to whisper. I cannot tell you much about this, because it is just a sweet misty mystery to be made clear, no doubt, in due time. But near my heart through all the summer, faint at the first, but growing stronger with the passing days, I have nursed and shielded the intimation of another springing forth in a spring-time to come, to which this present dissolution seems to be entirely indispensable. And so I shall die, as I have lived, with my face to the sun and the great loving heavens, and will welcome the autumn frosts with a psalm, as I welcomed the spring sunshine. My spirit must go whence it came, and this tabernacle fall to the dust; yet I fear nothing that can befall, for I know both will be held in the hollow of His hand who keeps account of the leaf as of the fruit. I am sure of all the life I shall ever need. I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He will not leave me in the grave. All the days of my appointed time I will wait until my change comes. And so, if you are saying, "We all do fade as a leaf" in the key of a monody, you must speak for yourself, and not for me. I will sing a psalm, because in being true to life I am also true to this time of dissolution, and will wait for my rising from the dead.

And now do you ask why I have lingered so long over this small entity, which is passing, as I speak, into what we call nonentity? I know of no better answer here and now than those words of the rarest woman among the poets of our century, which have haunted me and sung themselves in my heart since I listened to my brother's sermon last Sunday: —

"There's nothing small.
No lily-muffled hum of summer bee
But finds its coupling in the spinning star,
No pebble at your foot but proves a sphere,
No chaffinch but implies a cherubim.
Earth is full of heaven,
And every common bush afire with God."

So I would fain find in my leaf a lesson for our life in which there shall be no room for the monody to silence the psalm I heard the small thing sing, when we look down, I say, into the deepness of our life instead of looking, as we are so apt to look, only along the surfaces.

And, in doing this, what can I do better than to still touch the prophet's symbol, and say again: It is true that we all do fade as a leaf. But what then? Am I sure that I realize for my human kind what it is so to fade? Do I touch in my brooding the cube or the superficies? and may it not be true of me and mine that in our painful brooding over this one thing I am in peril of closing the door of my most precious gift from Heaven, of reflection and anticipation, forgetting that I am more than many leaves, and what I deem to be mere fading and falling is also the ripening and the ingathering, while the time for the ripening and gathering shall be as He ordains in whom are all things and we in Him, and must be as true as the May was for our spring? While this truth links in with another, that not one aspect in this life ought to hold me to the exclusion of another; but I shall take true note of life altogether, as I note how we fade and fall. I would look on every true life and weigh its worth as that noblest of all the seers in our time — whose words I have cited — sees the leaf, the only man I know of who has turned our monody into a psalm,— John Ruskin.

For, in those moments of our brooding, we may say in our hearts: I am a mere leaf, and no more on the tree of this human life, and withering at that. I look on the great fruit-

ful life all about me, so wonderful and beautiful, the saints and seers, the heroes, the creators, the thinkers, the singers of great psalms, the artists who win the world to worship, and the eloquent who pour out the living word,—

> "Th' applause of listening senates to command,
> And read their history in a nation's eyes."

I know these fruit-bearers, and hold them in love and reverence; but what blossom of fragrance or fruit from the blossom has ripened through the years for the world's blessing where I have hung on the tree? and this may be true; but, then, I will fall back on my symbol, and say, What of the leaf, if this be all?

I mind a morning long ago when I was at work in our bit of garden, on a fervent day in the early summer, tending a plant on which I set great store, when I noticed one delicate bud was in peril of suffering from the fervent fires of the noontide; but, then, a leaf from the spray just above the blossom was bending over my small blossom for succor and shelter,— just that leaf, and no more. And those were trying times for me and mine, else it may be the thing would have slipped away unnoticed. But, do you know, it touched me, like some strain from the great old psalms, as when they sing, 'He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty, while still the memory stays sweet in my heart. Am I a mere leaf, then, that and no more? I can cast my speck of grateful shadow and succor over some blossom; and that shall be as the shadow of the Almighty, or I have cast the shadow somewhere for all blessing. Am I as a leaf only? Well, the tiny entity holds itself fair to the sun and the rain, holds its own against the storms and the fires of the summer, stands shoulder to shoulder with its comrades,— if not for fruit, then for timber, inbreathing and outbreathing by day and by night for the world's whole blessing. No life but for the leaf. No purple grape or golden apple but for the leaf.

Well, I am fruit also; and, if I am to my own self true, falling, I fall honorably,—dying, it is not death,—*not death*, but consummation. And the world is the gainer for what one poor human leaf may do.

All honor, then, and reverence for the fruit-bearers in the world's great life! No word I can say would meet the demand, the great and good of every name, and in all the diversities of gifts. But have we not known other men and women to match them, just as good and true, that were nothing but leaves, and with no name to endure in this world, but holding in all they were and all they could do the assurance of the everlasting life? The good soldiers swept down in the storm of battle in the old times, we remember. And now may God help us in the new; for, as every leaf on the tree is a mediator and savior, standing between the dead rock and the living man, so my unknown man or woman, my one among the masses of the faithful workers and strivers,—these leaves in being just what they are, I say, are fruit also, and not one has lived or can die in vain.

There may be no monument to tell where they rest; but what they have been and what they have done is their monument, and bears the inscription, "The leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations."

And, mother, do you think the little one that was taken from you could be nothing to the world which was so much to you, it faded and fell so soon? Be sure the leaf that lives only for a day was something to the tree. It did not live in vain. This had been a poorer world, had any leaf for a day never bloomed. Your tiny babe's touch of bloom has helped the world to bloom; and it did not fall, as it could not spring, save by the will of our Father. While, if one could but clasp the whole truth, we should say the autumn as the spring lay within the brief moments of its life.

And, so I say, the lesson of the leaf comes home to us all, if we will but take it to our hearts, and not as a threnody, but a psalm.

We see those, in this life all about us, living noble and fruitful lives. You who are at the spring-time may say: And if I could only do what that man or that woman is doing, some great and fruitful thing, that would be a world's blessing. Then I think I could fade and fall with the psalm in my heart. But I plod on at my task, unknown, unnoticed, unprofitable, and a mere nobody.

Well, dear friend, let me tell you that I think such a discontent may be as good a thing, in its time and place, as life holds in its treasury. If you are young, there may be hope for you in the measure of a wholesome discontent, as there was for me so many years ago; for, if you are young, the discontent is always of worth, which can urge you on to a finer and nobler consummation.

It is a sign, as when the dove with the olive leaf fluttered to the window of the ark, that there are wreaths growing outside for the plucking by and by. Still, the question for the most of us to solve is not, Am I fruit? but, Am I a leaf? for I take it that, if we are to be fruit, then we shall be, and what we have to do in that case will be to keep sound as we can to the core. But let me say for the last time that the leaf is fruit in its own order. And so do I cast my mite of shadow? Do I beautify ever so small a bit of barrenness? Do I help along in the measure of my one-leaf power in forming, if not fruit, then good timber? And, when I have this question truly, I have answered all.

Let me make this sure in the life I must live, and then I may be sure of this also, that the frosts of autumn, when they come, will be divine as the dewy splendors of June. A falling leaf, I shall fall with all the honors; and the soul in me returning to the God who gave it will again be elected for the most blessed thing it can be or do. And, when we reach this faith, we shall not fear death any more than we fear life; and this may well be the conclusion of my psalm of the autumn leaf from the poet's heart: —

"Drifting away, like mote on the stream;
To-day's disappointment, yesterday's dream;
Ever resolving, yet never to mend,—
Such our consistency. Where is the end?
Whirling away like leaf on the wind,
Points of attachment left daily behind,
Where to repose ourselves, whither to tend?
Such our consistency. Where is the end?
Bright leaves may scatter, sports of the wind,
But stands to the winter the great tree behind.
Frost cannot wither it, storms cannot bend,
Roots firmly clasping the rock at the end.
Calm is the firmament, over the cloud
Clear shine the stars through the rifts of the shroud.
There our repose shall be, thither we tend.
Spite of our waverings, *God* is the end."

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EDWARD A. HORTON.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

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How Does God Reveal Himself?

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HOW DOES GOD REVEAL HIMSELF?

I AM to attempt this morning an answer to the question, How does God reveal himself? and I take as a Scripture starting-point a few words from the thirty-first chapter of Genesis, the sixteenth verse, "Whatsoever God hath said unto thee, do." I take this simply because it assumes that God has said something.

I would like to remark, however, as showing my confidence in human nature, that I do not believe there is a man in all the world whom, if he felt perfectly certain that God had told him to do some particular thing, would hesitate in doing it. That which is charged so frequently as intentional disregard of the commands of God, if you analyze it carefully, will be found to be something else,— doubt or question as to whether it really is a command of God. That only by the way.

It is assumed by all persons who have dealt with this subject that, if God exists, and if he really cares for his human children, he will speak to them, he will reveal himself in some way. He will tell them at least so much as is really necessary for them to know. This is the assumption underlying all arguments concerning revelations being found in this direction or that. And, before there is any very careful thinking on the subject, I believe that it is somewhat naïvely assumed that it would be a very simple thing for God to speak to men, so that they could be certain of it.

I wish, therefore, at the outset this morning to raise the question as to whether it is an easy thing for God to manifest himself infallibly to the world. I propose to come at my answer by reviewing, as briefly as I can consistently

with clearness, some of the methods by which the world at various times has supposed that God has revealed himself to his human children.

We find at the very outset of the Bible a belief such as we find connected with the beginning of almost all the great religions of the world,— the assumption that God at first used to come to the earth himself to be seen, and to talk with certain selected men. In the old Greek and Roman stories of their religion you find it was quite a common thing for one or other of the gods to make a visit to the earth for some special reason,— to meet, to converse with, some man or woman. So we find in the Old Testament that God is said to have come to the Garden of Eden, and walked in it in the cool of the day, and talked with Adam and Eve. We find, also, that he came to Jacob, he came to Abraham. He visited different ones of the Old Testament heroes at different periods of their lives, saw them face to face, and conversed with them, according to the story. And yet, curiously enough, did you ever note its bearing on the question whether the Bible is an infallible revelation? In the New Testament it is most expressly and emphatically declared that "no man hath seen God at any time."

Suppose God could come to the world now and then and speak to somebody. It would be an infallible revelation to that person if he really believed that it was God; but it would not be so easy for God to make even this one man perfectly certain that it was he, if you will stop to think of it a little. At any rate, in the next generation it would be only a tradition, a story. If a man should come to-day and tell you that God had visited him, and said such and such things to him, would you believe it? If you repeated the story to your next-door neighbor, would he believe it? Would the next generation of people believe it? I raise these questions simply to show you that it is not so easy a thing as one might imagine.

Let us pass now to another method by which God is

supposed to have revealed himself. It is said — and this also our religion shares with the other religions of the world — that from time to time God has sent angels, messengers, to carry some particular statement of his will. But do you not see again how very difficult it would be to convince anybody to-day of an angelic presence? If a man should see what he supposed to be an angel, how could he be certain of it? How could he be certain, in the face of the scientists and the physicians who deal so elaborately with the theory of vision, that it was not an hallucination? At any rate, if a man to-day should come and say an angel talked with him yesterday, I should want a good deal more evidence than this mere statement before I could accept the claim as true. If I accepted it and told you, you would say, Here are two deluded people instead of one. It would never occur to you to accept it as true.

Let us take now another method. It is said — and this is the great claim held by Christendom to-day — that God has given the world an infallible book, that certain men were inspired to write so and so. This book began to be composed from eight hundred to a thousand years before Christ, so that it is somewhere near three thousand years old, the oldest parts of it. The newest part of it is something less than two thousand years old. It is said that God inspired certain men to write this book. But when we look at it, if we look at it as we do at any other book, we find it full of historical errors, of scientific mistakes. We find it full of contradiction. We find in the early parts of it a reflection of the world's immaturity, not to say barbarism. We find immorality. We find God represented as countenancing things which the conscience of the world to-day utterly repudiates, as partial, as cruel, as unclean, as inhuman. We find no end of difficulties of that sort in accepting the claim.

And, then, suppose God should give an infallible book to some one people. It would be in their language. Then, if

it was to be worth anything to the rest of the world, it would have to be translated. You would need infallible translators; for we find that the people who actually translated the Bible differed in the widest possible way as to its meaning, and the translation into one language does not tell the same story in certain important particulars that another translation tells. So, if the book is infallible, the translators are not.

Then, if you raise the question as to how an infallible book can be transmitted from age to age up the centuries, we meet other insuperable difficulties. The oldest manuscripts we have of the New Testament take us back only to the fourth century. Nobody now living has ever seen or knows anything about the original manuscripts. They have simply been copied by hundreds of hands; and, as matter of fact, we know that these copyists have differed from each other in thousands of places. So, if there ever was an infallible book, we have it not to-day.

You see, then, the difficulties that surround this question of giving the world a revelation of God that shall be infallible as a book. And, then, there are some other difficulties connected with this. If God really exists, and if he really loves his children, would he let men be born and die for two or three hundreds of thousands of years before sending them any book at all? Provided, I say, an infallible book was absolutely essential to their salvation, would he give his infallible revelation to one little people in a country occupying space about as large as the State of Massachusetts, and not give it to any other people until two thousand years ago? And, then, would he gradually reach out and let certain other people hear something about the fact that he had written a book, but still after two thousand years let them remain in such ignorance of it that less than a third of the world's inhabitants have heard that there is any such book? Would he have let the credentials of that book be so uncertain that the best scholars, the most earnest

thinkers, the most devoted worshippers and saints, should find it impossible to accept its claim to infallibility?

What kind of a revelation is it that comes to us in a fashion like this? What kind of a Father in heaven is it who reveals himself so fitfully, so partially, so uncertainly? My friends, it is simply unbelievable.

And, then, there is another difficulty about it. Every little while somebody comes along and tells us that they have got the key to this revelation, that nobody has understood it aright before. The Catholic Church, for example, has always made the claim that it, and it alone, could rightly interpret the revelation of God. In other words, God has given an infallible revelation to the world, which only a few particularly selected persons can understand. What does it reveal to people who wish to find the way, but cannot read its meaning?

Then again here comes Swedenborg. I do not wish to speak disrespectfully of him. If there is a friend or a follower of his here this morning, I would have them understand that I have a very great reverence for Swedenborg. He was one of the most remarkable scientific men of his age, and is beginning to be recognized as one of the few great men in a scientific direction; but his scientific claims have been overshadowed by his religious reputation. I have reverence for him as a religious thinker; but, when he says God gave his infallible revelation to the world hundreds or thousands of years ago, but nobody understood it till he was born, I wonder why it happened to be called a revelation at all, or why God waited so long before giving us Swedenborg. Why cheat us with the name of revelation in bestowing upon the world a book which is a mystery until Mr. Swedenborg happens to be born?

And in this latter day comes Mrs. Eddy, with her "Key to the Scriptures." Nobody has really understood the Bible until she had her special and personal revelation as to its meaning. Here, again, why does God cheat the

world by giving it a book which is supposed to contain the secret counsels of his will, and which nobody can understand until certain highly favored individuals happen to come along, and tell us on their own authority that they know about it. How shall I know that Swedenborg knows? How shall I know that Mrs. Eddy knows? How shall I know that the Catholic Church knows? For here are so many knowledges contradicting each other at every turn, and each of them the infallible voice of the Almighty. In the presence of so many infallibilities, no wonder that people are confused, and question as to whether there is any infallibility at all, or even any revelation that is fairly comprehensible, though it be not infallible.

There is another way by which it is thought that God could reveal himself infallibly to man; and that is by incarnating himself in a man, living the life of God here among us as a man. Let me suggest to you, however, that it is not so simple and easy a thing, after all, even if we could get over the difficulty of the Immaculate Conception. Consider a moment. If God should attempt to put himself into a man, he must either keep himself within the limits of the human or he must break over those limits. If he keeps himself within the limits of the human, then it is simply a man; and nobody on the face of the earth could ever find out that it was anything other than a man. If he breaks over the limits of the human, then it ceases to be human without becoming divine.

The difficulties here, to a person who will take the trouble to think a little clearly, are simply insuperable.

I wish now to note again another Catholic claim, not simply to the interpretation of the Scriptures. The Church has made the claim that the Spirit of God abides in it, and inspires it perpetually day after day and year after year, so as to prevent its making mistakes. The Church, as expressing itself through its œcumenical councils, has claimed to be always infallible. In the modern world it claims to be in-

fallible, as expressing itself *ex cathedra* in matters of faith and morals through the pope.

Now, when we examine the claims of the Church, we have a right, I think, in the face of assertions like that, to find out whether it has ever made any mistakes. And the careful historian, who has no creed to support, is obliged to confess that it has made mistake after mistake, to say nothing of its horrors, its cruelties, its immoralities. It has made mistake after mistake in matters of history, in matters of science. It has planted itself in the way of almost every single step that the world has attempted to take forward in its upward course towards civilization. So it has proved its infallibility, if it has proved it at all, by blunder after blunder, by committing itself to positions from which it was obliged to retreat, by holding certain things to be true which have been demonstrated after careful consideration to be anything but true.

So this claim no one who cares simply for the truth can for a moment accept. It can be accepted only by faith; and faith, if I had time to go into the matter this morning, I could show you clearly, is something entirely different from that which the Catholic means when he uses the word in this sense. Faith, as it is popularly used to-day, means simply shutting your eyes and accepting as true that which is claimed to be true on somebody's else authority. Faith is sheer credulity, as thus popularly used, and not that magnificent thing about which Paul speaks, and which the great religious thinkers and noblest leaders of the world have comprehended under that term.

How, then, can God reveal himself to the world as infallible? How can he give us a message that cannot be questioned, so that we can know that he has "said," and that he has said such and such a definite thing?

Right here I wish to stop for a moment, and raise another question. It is assumed by people on every hand that we really need an infallible revelation, that we cannot have a

divine revelation unless it is infallible. Did you ever stop to face that query sufficiently to see whether it is a rational one or not? I am ready to declare here this morning that not only do we not need any infallible revelation in matters of religion, but such a revelation; if it could be given to the world, would be nothing less than a calamity, to be mourned instead of welcomed.

Why do we need an infallible revelation? There is only one reason that can be given for it; and that is based on an assumption instead of on a fact. It is assumed,—it is assumed, I say, that God is going to damn people forever for making intellectual mistakes. If he is not, then why do we need an infallible revelation in religion, any more than we do in medicine or astronomy, or chemistry or geography, or mathematics, or any other department of human thought or life?

It is assumed, on the basis of an old tradition, that the world is lost, and that we must have an infallible revelation to tell us how we are to escape the wrath and anger of God, and that, if we do not get that infallible revelation, there is no hope for us. This, I say, is assumed. There is not one single scintilla of proof in favor of such a belief on the face of the earth. The world is not lost, the world is not under God's wrath; and there is no reason for our supposing that he is going to punish people in another life because they make intellectual mistakes, because they do not happen to believe this particular thing or that. Even the old-time churches are beginning to recognize the claim in this direction, and to say that a loving spirit and a noble life are, after all, more important than having correct opinions.

If having correct opinions, I repeat, is not absolutely essential to salvation, then the world is not so very hopelessly at sea in religion, even if it does not have absolutely correct opinions.

Let me now come to the positive side. I have said that an infallible revelation in religion, if we had such a thing,

would be a calamity. I say it again with all the emphasis of which I am capable. Let us think for a moment. When men have claimed to have infallible and unchanging standards in any other department of life than religion, what has been the effect of it? They have stunted the world; they have stopped the world's thinking; they have hindered growth; they have stood in the way of development of individuality in character and thinking. Let me give you an illustration: —

The French Academy in literature has been an evil to France. It has set a standard as to the use of speech and the methods of writing, and ideals in poetry and literature generally which has made it impossible for a great, free, individual writer to exist, unless he were powerful enough to break through all these barriers and defy the conventions of his time.

Pope, for a long time in England, set the literary standard for poetry in so fixed, so hard and fast a manner, that men of greater genius than he were voted as no geniuses at all because they did not conform to his particular style of writing. Wordsworth was cast out for years, not recognized as a genuine poet, scorned, reviled, ridiculed, because he dared to be himself and to write, not as people had written in the past, but according to the individual genius and inspiration of his own soul.

Take the matter of painting in France. A school established such canons of art that, when Millet came,— a greater genius than France had known for perhaps a hundred years, —he was compelled to starve his whole life long, not receiving, as the result or reward of his efforts, as much money in years as almost any bit of canvas that his brush ever touched would bring to-day, and this because they had an infallible art standard in France, and Millet did not conform to it. He was bigger than the standard, and must paint according to his own divine insight.

This is what infallibilities come to outside of religion; and

the infallibility of the Bible to-day, the claim of infallibility, stands in the way of the religious growth of the nineteenth century more than all other things put together. It makes cowards of men. It turns preachers into trimmers, using phrases and words in public which do not express the real thought of their souls. They creep and crawl and ask the permission of synods and presbyteries to tell the truth. Why? Because these synods and presbyteries claim to be the depositaries of the summed up results of the infallibility of the Bible; and these men dare not speak out the thoughts of their hearts on peril of persecution, of dismissal from their pulpits — some of them, as they write me occasionally, on peril of making their wives and children hunger for bread.

A claimed infallibility, then, always stands in the way of growth, of progress, of the natural unfolding of life; and the world is as if it were under dominion, like that of a Chinese garden, where no tree is at liberty to unfold in the light and air according to the power that is in it, expressing its own individuality, but where it must be cut and clipped and trimmed after some pattern which somebody supposes to be an improvement on nature.

It does another thing. This claim to infallibility has been productive of the most colossal spiritual self-conceit. A few men have been selected by special favor, by the particular grace of God to see what other people cannot see. "Poor, poor men! God has left them simply to their reason, to history, experience, and common sense, but has given *me* a divine instinct; and *I* see the truth!" Do you not note how it takes away from that simplicity, that human humbleness and tenderness of spirit, which we regard as the manifestation of the divine life in man? It cultivates the very opposite of the spirit of Jesus, who "made himself of no reputation." These men make themselves of all reputation, and look down upon everybody else as outside the fold of God.

And, then, another thing: it develops cruelty, hardness of heart, persecution, and the shedding of blood. This claim to be the infallible keeper of God's secrets has slain more saints, has kindled more fires, has created more instruments of torture, has shed more blood, than almost any other claim that the world has ever known. The whole pathway of human advance is lighted with fires, is dripping with blood, the blood of the noblest,— the saints, the martyrs,— those that have tried to be true to their higher instincts, who claimed that the world had not reached its ultimate, but were ready to hold themselves open to the incoming of new and fresh influxes of the divine.

Let us, then, if we care for truth, if we care for human growth, if we care for the manifestation of real spirituality on the part of the people in the Church, if we care for human tenderness, if we care for the growth of men, let us have done with all thought of and care for infallibilities anywhere. They are a curse: they are anti-God and anti-man.

Infallibility in one sense — and in a harmless sense — can be attained, it does come, to this extent. If we prove a certain thing true, demonstrate it beyond question, so far, of course, we attain infallibility; but this infallibility in matters of science is always open to question. It does not need to be defended by synods and presbyteries or heresy trials; it does not need to be defended by creeds; it does not need to be defended by persecution, fires, and instruments of torture. If it be true, it stands as God's truth. If not, it passes away; and the world is glad to have it replaced by a higher and better view.

Now does God reveal himself? Yes! Forever new, ever advancing and progressing revelation. Where and how? Why, lest you should think I have swept so many things out of existence, let me say I believe there are many revelations of God that have come through the medium of the Catholic Church, many revelations came through the

person of Jesus, many revelations are contained in that Bible, many revelations have come by messengers who have brought the world a message from the Unseen. Whatever is truth is in so far a revelation of the divine; and, if it is known to be true, just in so far it is infallible.

Now let us see. God, the life, the heart, the thought of this great universe. The universe, then, so far as it reaches, is a manifestation, a revelation, of Him who is the heart and life and thought of it all. Why? A man builds a house. He reveals himself in that structure just in so far as the house is capable of holding a manifestation of him. A man paints a picture. He puts just so much of himself into the picture as the picture can hold. A man carves a bit of marble in some shape of beauty. That reveals him so far as it is capable of revealing him. Whatever is the manifestation of a life is a revelation of that life so far as the manifestation extends.

Now let us see. Here is a grain of sand. That grain of sand contains just as much of God as a grain of sand is capable of holding. It reveals God just so far as it is capable of revealing him. A blade of grass,— a new element there,— life, beauty, fragrance: that reveals something more of God, just as much as a blade of grass is capable of revealing. Here is a beautiful flower, more than a blade of grass; and that reveals as much as a flower is capable of revealing and manifesting. And so you may climb from the lowest clear up to the highest height of this wondrous universe about us. Study the mountains, the seas, the trees, and the rivers,— all the beauty, the majesty, the sublimity,— and you get so far a revelation of the Divine. Study the wide night sky, with its stars, its worlds, its suns, surrounded by systems, its order, its might, its glory; and you have a revelation of God there, so far as the material universe is capable of holding and manifesting the Divine.

But now we enter a new order. Here is life, a tiny cell of protoplasm: something there different from the ordinary

material of the universe around us, the beginning of the man. That holds all of God that a globule of protoplasm can hold; and it reveals all it holds. Then you have the lower orders of life,— fishes, birds, reptiles, mammals,— and far away down on the borders of the animal world the first man,— man looking up and questioning, looking around with wonder; man having climbed on his feet and found his hands; man beginning to reason, beginning to think, beginning to question, beginning to wonder and to worship; man feeling himself pressed on and touched by the invisible universe around him, as well as that which is visible,— man.

And here — well did the old writer say that he is in the image of God; for God, when he manifests himself in a man, manifests himself a thousand-fold, a million-fold, more than it is possible for him to manifest himself in all the marvels of the material universe, with humanity left out of account. His will, his thought, his feeling, his love, his hope, his person, his aspiration, his tenderness, his pity, his care,— here is all that we mean by the noblest type and ideal of that which is human.

And is God all this? Yes, and infinitely more. Well did the old writer say that God's glory was manifested in the face of Jesus the Christ. You know well I hold Jesus a man. Those who wish to prove to us that men are degraded and not capable of something unspeakably magnificent rob us of Jesus, and tell us he was not a man; and, therefore, man is not capable of producing Jesus. Jesus was man, is man; and he is an illustration of what can flower and blossom out on the topmost bough and outermost twig of humanity. I hold him in the spiritual and moral realm supreme so far,— not that I do not believe others have lived as good as he; but he stands the one great exemplar of what it is possible for a man to become. Read his life, trace him from the beginning of his ministry through; see that human tenderness, pity for human weakness, love and sympathy for the poor; all that is sweet and

tender and human and helpful; blessing the children, gathering the lost to his bosom, pitying the fallen,— infinite tenderness for sin, for vice; caring for the outcast, calling the lost, hopeless of none.

Here is God. God is that; for that is a part of his manifestation, a part of his revelation. He is that; and he is infinitely more. Every mother that ever nursed a babe at her breast with a longing, yearning tenderness that no man, I suppose, can ever comprehend, is a revelation of God. Every man who dared to stand sturdily on his feet for the right, who has faced mobs, who has disregarded wealth and reputation for the truth, who has fought for the highest ideals of which he could dream, who has walked to the stake, who has endured the boot and the thumb-screw, who has had his joints racked and tortured,— every such man reveals God.

That is God. God is like that. He is capable of that; for that is a little tiny manifestation of him. As I told you the other day, God's person,— for personality is one partial manifestation of him,— God's love, God's tenderness, God's pity, God's truth,— God is all that has ever been manifested as noble and sweet and true in the world. And he is more; for the power that has lifted the world to its present level has not even been touched, much less drained or exhausted. For the world still rises; and the high tide is over yonder under the mists, beyond our farthest vision. God is all this, and more.

But, says a critic of mine, in one of the New York papers the other day, this is Pantheism; and Mr. Savage does not understand philosophy when he explains it as anything else. The critic apparently does not know what Pantheism means.

It is anything but Pantheism. It is not Spinoza's doctrine. It is the doctrine of the immanence of God in the universe, which also includes the transcendence of God, God manifesting himself through the universe, but not confined to it,— the God of evolution, who has lifted the world

to its present level, while we look for something finer and grander than we can conceive; and we wonder what it shall be when it shall appear.

This is in part the revelation of God.

There is another point I must touch on, because it is constantly being misrepresented. I get letters almost every week which show that people have not thought here clearly in regard to these matters. They say, if love, pity, and tenderness are manifestations of God, then are not lying and cruelty and disease also manifestations of him. No! Why? It is perfectly clear, if you will stop and think a moment. All the goodness of the world, all its love, its tenderness, hope, happiness, is simply the result of keeping the laws of God; and all the evil — every particle of it — is simply the result of the carelessness or the wilfulness of man in breaking those laws. They are anti-God instead of a part of the manifestation of God. They come as the result of our disregard of God. If every law of God were obeyed, from the lowest clear up to the highest, it would be one divine, supreme harmony of poetry and music and love and joy.

There is no possible evil in the nature of things. There is not an atom of anything that is imperfect. Evil can be only one of two things,— either the excessive use or the perverted use of faculties and powers which in themselves are right. So that evil is not a part of the nature of things: it is against the nature of things. It is the result, the necessary result, as I believe, of a weak and ignorant humanity's growth, study, experiment, development, in the midst of conditions like those that confront and surround us.

God, then, reveals himself to the lowest and first men,— reveals just as much of himself as they can see and comprehend. At every grade of uplift the revelation is clearer, because we can see clearer. All truth is the writing of God, all good the manifestation of his nature and his presence; and, as I said, the present development is not all.

I look in the eyes of one who is dying; and I see there a glimpse, a shadowy reflection of something that is not clear to me, but which shows to me that this soul is looking out upon other vistas than those my eyes can see, and that there is another world surrounding and enclosing this, which is grander and sweeter and finer. And God's revelation includes, shall include, as we are capable of seeing it, reading it, all that, more than as yet has entered into the heart of man to conceive.

God is all that is manifested in the universe around us, climbing from the lowest to the highest. He is all the good that is manifested in love, in humanity, all the tenderness and devotion and consecration and care, all the love for truth, all the self-sacrifice, all the holy hope, all the saintly devotion, all the noble consecration. He is all this. He is joy, he is light, he is peace,—the peace that passes understanding. He is all that we can see or dream of good,—all which is manifested, all which hovers on the horizon and promises to be manifested when the sun shall rise and the mists disappear and things shall become clear and bright,—all this.

This is so far the revelation of God. It is not finished. It is going on to increase and brighten every day. It is not infallible. Let us thank God that it is not. For we have a chance to think on our own account, to experiment, to develop, to feel out after the finer and better things; and, as we work out our own salvation with fear and trembling, we are confident that it is God who works with us to will and to do of his own good pleasure, and that to-morrow there will be a higher and grander vision. The to-morrow after that, something better still. And so the world goes on to find its consecration and consummation in ever-unfolding truth, in ever sweeter and deeper love.

Father, we thank Thee for the manifestation of Thyself which has come to us; that Thou hast been in every age;

never having left Thyself without a witness; that Thou hast spoken through all sainted souls, through all sacred books, through all endeavors of men after truth; and that we may confidently expect that to-morrow morning a new gleam of light and a new whisper of Thy truth shall be ours. Amen.

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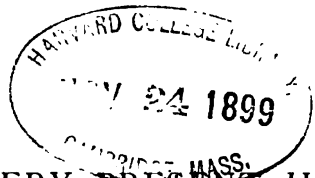

GOD A VERY PRESENT HELP.

As a text, I take the words to be found in the first verse of the forty-sixth Psalm,— words almost identical in phrasing with the announcement of my theme,— "God is a very present help."

You will note, because you are familiar with this verse, that I leave off the two words "in trouble." I do that, not because I wish to omit this department of our life, but because I wish to broaden our thought and conception, and make them include something more than trouble.

The present conditions of thought and life have grown out of past conditions. It sometimes helps us and makes matters a little clearer for us to glance at some of these past conditions, and trace at least the line of growth. I wish to ask you then to go back with me for a few moments, and consider the relations existing between man and his gods in the childhood world.

The gods then were frequently supposed to be former members — distinguished heroes or chieftains — of the tribe. They had passed into the invisible, and had taken on an indefinite increase of influence and power; but they were like the members of the tribe. They were of similar passions and feelings, and interested in substantially the same things still. There were gods of the hearth. There were gods of the bin, or the family food supply. These deities stood in the most intimate personal relations with their worshippers. If the sacrifices were properly attended to, if the prayers were effective, if the proper honors were paid, these gods could be induced to be a very present help

in any emergency. They could send rain or withhold it. They could assist the members of the tribe in their hunt, give them success or thwart their efforts. They could heal those that were sick, or in their anger they could send disease upon those that were well. They stood thus in the most intimate relations with the people; and the people were to pray to them or offer them some sufficient inducement to enable them to come to their help when they needed it.

To take a step ahead and upward, let us consider the conditions of things during the early part of the Hebrew life and religion. The Hebrew people at that time were not monotheists, in our sense of the word. They had come to believe that Yahweh or Jehovah was their God; but they did not doubt the existence of the gods of Ammon or Philistia or Moab. Their God was the one for them to worship; and after a time they came to believe that he was king of all the gods, the greatest, the mightiest of them all. But still you see he had not passed out of the likeness of their own humanity. He was only a greater man, a king sitting on a throne, ruling the world in arbitrary fashion. In the midst of caring for the universe, he would listen to their prayers; and if he chose, if he thought best, he might send an angel, or he might so direct the course of natural or human events that the particular wish of the petitioner might be granted.

To take a still further step in advance, we come to what has been called the complete monotheism of the modern world. For the last two thousand years, practically all over Christendom, there has been a belief in the unity of God; for even those who call themselves Trinitarian would deny that their Trinity destroys the conception of unity.

It has been in some mysterious way, then, *one* God. But this one God,— I know this fact is familiar to you, but I need to mark it off very clearly and distinctly from that which I am going to present in a moment,— this one God

has sat apart from the ongoing course of nature, he has been in the heavens; he created the world, but people have thought of the world as somehow separated from him. We talk to-day of Nature, of Natural Force, of Natural Law, as though these were something distinct and separate from God. And God, when he wished to come into communication with the world, was supposed to break through this natural order in some way. In one sense, he was the power in nature: he supported it. But for his will it would fall into nothingness. And yet, somehow, like a machine which a man has invented and set going, nature went of itself; and God was ordinarily outside of it. If he wished to manifest himself to his children, he must break through the order of nature.

And so a whole system of supernaturalism has been believed in. Nature was secular, godless: the supernatural was divine and sacred. God dwelt in the supernatural. Even the New Testament is full of traces of this idea. Satan is spoken of there as the god of this world. The people who cared for this world, who loved this world, were engaged in this world's affairs, were supposed to be antagonistic to God. Worldliness is the antithesis of religious living and devotion.

So God has been apart from things; and, if we wished to get him to help us, we might pray to him. And it has been said that the fervent prayer of the righteous man would avail much. If we persisted in our prayers, we could get him interested in us, get him to interfere and do something that would not otherwise come to pass. I remember years ago hearing an evangelist, famous at that time all over the country, speak of prayer as "the power that moves the arm that moved the world."

This, then, has been the generally prevalent conception of God and of his ordinary relation to us. If we wanted him to help us, we must pray, singly and persistently, or get together in groups; and we might prevail upon him to help

us. Our Puritan ancestors, for example,— and I suppose our Dutch ancestors here in New York equally well,— believed that they could get God to send rain in time of drought; believed that he might interfere with the weather on the Atlantic in case their friends were in ships at sea, that they might get him to secure them favorable crops in the autumn, that they might get him in cases of extreme peril to deliver them, that, if they were sick, in certain special cases he would interfere and heal in answer to their petitions. But it was always a God away off and outside of the things, who came on special occasions and in answer to prayers to perform for them certain special things.

As the result of the development of modern science, most of this conception of God's relation to the world and to us is outgrown. At any rate, from the minds of thoughtful and earnest people,— people intellectually serious, and who try to have orderly systems in their minds, in which they can intelligently believe,— this old conception has passed away; and the danger is that, as the result of this scientific investigation, the thoughts it has produced and the feelings that always follow and conform to the thought, we shall feel that we are without God any more. As a famous astronomer once said, God was an unnecessary hypothesis to him in his science. He started with matter and force, and needed nothing more in order to work out his mathematical problem. So he did not concern himself with any belief in God.

I suppose that in large numbers of cases there are people who would like very much to believe that they have a Father in heaven and on earth, and that he is really a very present help, who find it exceedingly difficult to hold this belief any longer. They feel they must be honest with themselves. They do not want to be led astray by theories; and so they put this thought out of their minds, and try, heroically and bravely, to walk through the world and fight the battles of life, in the face of these tremendous and apparently conflicting forces, alone.

I would do this if I believed that truth pointed that way. I want to ask you, however, to consider with me a little, and very carefully, as to whether truth does point that way; as to whether this idea that we are losing God from our lives, that he is no longer a very present help,— as to whether this is anything more than an eclipse of faith, a passing phase of thought attendant upon the fact that we have not as yet thought ourselves through and thought ourselves clear.

Let us see, then, where we are. Science has demonstrated beyond all question that there is only one force in the universe,— *only one force.* Do you note the significance of that, —*one force* in the universe. That is scientific demonstration, unquestioned by any competent thinker of the modern world.

Now what is the nature of that force? Herbert Spencer tells us — I quoted this to you the other day in another connection: I need it, however, again; and he is the best authority on the subject that I know of — that the force which is manifested in the universe around us is the same force as that which wells up in ourselves under the form of consciousness. Identity, then, between us and this one force that is in the universe around us.

Now I wish to read to you a few brief words from the other man most competent to speak of any one alive; for Herbert Spencer and Mr. Alfred Russel Wallace are, undoubtedly, the two greatest scientific thinkers to-day upon earth. Wallace, as you know, shares with Darwin the honor of an independent discovery of that one principle which distinguishes that which has come to be called Darwinism. In an essay on "The Limits of Natural Selection as applied to Man," Wallace says, "All force is probably will-force." He quotes Huxley as saying "that our volitions count for something as a condition of the course of events." Then he goes on: "If, therefore, we have traced one force, however minute, to its origin in our own will, while we have no knowledge of any other primary cause of force, it does not

seem an improbable conclusion that all force may be will-force, and thus that the whole universe is not merely dependent on, but actually *is*, the will of higher intelligences, or of one Supreme Intelligence."

The last and highest word of science, then, is that this one force which is manifested in the universe is *will*-force, like our own, and exercised by a power identical with that which is manifested in us under the form of consciousness.

But is not this supposition contradicted by the fact that this will manifests itself as unchanging, inexorable,— a force that works always according to what we have come to call Natural Law? Would not a father break through this order, and interfere in the case of his children in distress and trouble?

This is the hasty supposition of people who do not think themselves clear. If you will give it a little careful attention, you will see that this absolute and unchanging order is the natural and necessary result of perfect wisdom and perfect love. Perfect wisdom does a thing once in a certain way under certain conditions, because that is the best way, the right way. Under similar conditions, then the second time how will he do it? He must either do it the same way he did in the first place or else do it in a poorer way, if, in the first place, he did it in the best way. Perfect wisdom, then, necessitates this absolute order. Perfect love necessitates it just as well.

Suppose I should fall overboard at sea and be in danger, or suppose I fell over a precipice. Suppose God interferes with the laws of the ocean and the winds, to save my particular life at that juncture. Suppose he reaches out his hand or sends an angel to keep me from falling over the precipice. Suppose he interferes in any way in the slightest degree to prevent the natural result of a natural antecedent. Then where are we? The universe straightway becomes confusion and chaos. We are in a mad-house. Knowledge would be impossible. No one could tell what would happen

next; and ten thousand times ten thousand more evil would result than could possibly come from the ongoing of what we speak of as Natural Force, in accordance with a perfect order.

Love, then, as well as wisdom, demands this perfect order. So this uniform order is no objection to our belief in the perfect love of our heavenly Father,— belief in his perfect wisdom and belief that he cares for me and is a very present help to me.

How can we get this help? The old idea was that prayer and the bringing of offerings, the presenting of a proper or sufficient consideration, produced a change in the gods, or in God. His worshippers got him to change, to do what otherwise he would not have done, to feel as he would otherwise not have felt. That is, they produced a change in him. This idea we see, at the demand of both wisdom and love, must be given up. As a matter of fact, we see that it is given up. No intelligent man any longer thinks for a moment that in any way he is going to change God. How could he change him except to make him worse, if he is perfect already?

If I thought that any prayer of mine could interfere in the slightest degree with the government of this universe, I should never dare open my lips in prayer again. Think of what would be the result if ten millions of people, praying in ten million different ways, could each have their requests granted,— granted by an interference with the orderly course of the world! We believe very easily, because it is said to have happened thousands of years ago, and we read it in a book and it has become part of a creed, that at the prayer of a man the sun stood still. But to-day, if the sun appeared at a certain point in the heavens the minutest fraction of a second earlier or later than the conditions demand, the world would be appalled and the faces of the astronomers would become white with consternation. It would mean that God had lost his hold, had ceased to be God.

It is very easy for us to think that it would be fine to have the world interfered with for our particular benefit; but, if the world were interfered with in the most infinitesimal particular, it would make all reasonable people feel that the universe had suddenly become insane.

What rational idea, then, can we attach to the thought of God's being a very present help? How does he help the world? How does he help you? How does he help me? Let me recall to you what you know so well, what is one of the profoundest bits of human wisdom that human lips ever uttered. You remember when they came to Lincoln and asked him about praying to God to help our side in the war, and asked him why he felt so sure that God was on our side, he said: "I am not at all anxious to get God on my side. What I am concerned about is to find out where God is and to get on his side." There is the profoundest philosophy, the clearest-eyed science, as well as the deepest religious thought of the world.

The thing for us to do is not to suppose that we can change God by our whims, our cries, or our prayers. It is to try humbly every moment of our lives to find out where God is and get in accord with him.

I said there is only one power in this universe, and that power is God. I would modify that in one slight way. We ourselves — we know not how — seem to have a certain power of initiative. I take it that is because we are the children of God, we are a part of the divine life. As Tennyson phrases it so beautifully,— wonderful religion and wonderful poetry, too,—

> "Our wills are ours — we know not how —
> Our wills are ours, to make them Thine."

And here is the profoundest word, that conception of prayer which Jesus uttered when he said, in that human outcry, "Let this cup pass from me: nevertheless, not my will, but Thine be done!" And there comes in the moral

sublimity and the religious grandeur of the life, the teachings of the Nazarene, that he everywhere made himself a child of God and a coworker with God, not seeking the accomplishment of his own will, making himself of no reputation.

Now I wish to bring this right straight home to our everyday lives, and let you see how real and practical a thing it is. With the old conception of the universe and the relation in which we stood to God, there was a secular department in our life and a religious or sacred part. Our ordinary lives we were supposed to carry on on our own account, dealing with natural forces and natural laws; and on Sunday and certain special occasions we came to God, and entered into relations with him. But this is absurd science, foolish and shallow philosophy, as well as the poorest religion on the face of the earth. There is no such division. No matter if you are committing a crime, you commit it by the power of God. You can do nothing without God. Every particle of your life is wrought out in co-operation with God. Every moment of your life you are face to face with the living, acting God. It is God that holds the spheres in their order. It is God who last night held the earth in its position as a sphere, kept its particles from flying off into space. It is God's will expressed eternally in what we call the "force of gravity" — without knowing at all what it is or how it works — that kept the foundations of your house steady, and your bed quiet while you slept, wrapped, folded literally in the arms of God, while he watched over your slumber and waked you this morning, as really, as personally, as though it were possible for him to tap on your door, pull back the shutter, and let in the rays of the rising sun.

It is God's power by which you walk, God's power in the beating of your heart, God's power in every activity and function of your bodily life, God's power in your mind while you would seek for truth,— God's power in every department of your being and every moment of your existence.

The farmer, if he wishes to raise a successful crop, must find out God's ways in soil, in seed and culture, and comply with those ways. And then it is God, while the farmer sleeps, and night and day, who affects the result. If a man wishes to cross the sea, he goes into the woods and cuts down one of God's trees, or enough of them for his purpose; and then, in accordance with God's laws of the strength of materials, he binds them together and constructs the body of his ship. Then God pulls the ship off of the ways on to the water. God's power in the waters lifts up their arms, and they receive it. The builder raises a mast, adjusts his sails, or puts steam into machinery down in the hold; and then God's winds or God's power in the atoms of the steam drives the vessel in the face of wind and tide across the ocean to its desired haven.

If a carpenter wishes to build a house, he must find out God's laws as manifested in the construction of a house; and, if he builds it in accordance with them, it stands. The bricklayer lays his bricks in accordance with God's laws; and the walls are secure and firm. Everything that we do we do by direct co-operation with the present living, active, tireless God.

James Russell Lowell once looked into a pool on the seashore, and, seeing the marvellously colored sea-plants and the variety of animated creatures there, gazed for a moment, and then said, "What an imagination God has!" And he was speaking literal truth. God is the one great poet of the universe; and the other poets are only those who catch little snatches of his eternal song. God is the great artist of the world, painting the magnificence of his sunsets and his sunrises, his oceans, his mountains, the shadows as they lie on the fields, the brooks as they run through the shadows and out into the sunlight. And the artists of the world are those who catch and are able to copy some little glimpse of the everlasting and infinite beauty of God.

God is the great musician. The white fingers of the waves

beat out their anthems and symphonies on the sandy and rocky keys of our coasts; and the winds turn the mighty forests into wind instruments. And so everywhere those who are able to listen and to catch a little of this marvellous rhythm and motion, that is always perfect harmony and never tires, become the Beethovens, the Mozarts, the Wagners of the world.

The men who invent simply find out some new way to obey a particular law of God, so that God will do something never before done in the world. Literally true. A man who builds a mill by the side of a brook,— what does he do? Does he invent any force? No. He simply finds out how to adapt his wheels to the eternal power of God's waterfalls, so that in that endless circuit which goes as mist up into the sky, and comes down as rain or snow on the mountains, and then tumbles and sings down the hillside on its way to the ocean, to continue in its circuit again, he shall be able to discover and obey God's changeless laws. And, then, these forces of God are present and active, and turn his wheels and keep the mighty machinery of the world in motion.

All the discoverers have simply found out some new phase of truth and the life of God, so that in all literalness it is true, as Kepler said,— "O God, I think over again thy thoughts after thee," — literally true. Whether you are an honest man or a dishonest man, whether you are living a true life or a false, no matter what you are doing or where, whatever you do, you do by the living present power of God. You may pervert his power to do evil, if you do evil at all. You simply obey his laws and the conditions of his higher life, if you are leading a true and a noble and a beautiful career.

Now come to a very practical application of it. I said it was God who is present in the beating of my heart, in the breathing of my lungs, the aeration of my blood, in all the activities of my physical life. Now if, knowingly or unknow-

ingly, perversely or no matter how, I break one of the conditions of health, I become ill, I am sick. Is God mocked? No. His powers go on the same, his forces: only now they work me pain and evil. But note this. God is at work in my body every moment, trying to heal. So, when the old Psalmist said, "He healeth all thy diseases," he told a literal truth. God is at work with every sick person on the face of the earth, doing his very best to heal him. And a famous physician said the other day, as a result of his long life experience, that, taking eight people out of ten who are sick, or who think they are, they will get well, whether they see a doctor or not. God is at work all the time, trying to do his best. One-tenth the doctors can help; but how do they help? They help by finding out the conditions, trying to mend the machinery a little; that is, remove obstructions and help God in the natural process of healing. The other tenth, said the doctor, have so broken the laws that the cases are hopeless; and they will die. But God is at work trying to heal them all the time.

Now how does he heal? I wish you to notice here that there is a large class of people in the modern world who are telling us that he is a magician. His method is, "Presto, change!" and a marvellous and sudden result is apparent. They say that is God's method.

God will build me new lung cells, if I want him to; but how? Because I go down on my knees, and pray to him? No. I might pray for a million years, and not produce the slightest possible change. How does he do it? I go out into the fresh air. I breathe, I fill my lungs with health, I exercise. I comply with the divine conditions; and new cell after new cell is created, and the unhealthy conditions are sloughed away.

God will build me muscular tissue in my arm if I want him to. Suddenly, as the result of faith? Not a bit of it. He will do it as the result of exercise and healthful feeding. I comply with God's conditions.

How does God build an oak? Does he do it in a minute? It takes him a hundred years. God works little by little, taking a particle out of the earth or out of the air; and, by a marvellous process, he transforms that which we call dead into life. He produces all these marvellous changes, then; but he does it indirectly, according to the methods which he has wrought out and which have been illustrated in this universe ever since it came into being. This is God's way, and the only way which we have any right to think of as connected with him. Why? Because all experience teaches this and no other.

He turns water into wine, not by pronouncing a magical formula over it. No. It takes him six months to do it, perhaps. He does it in accordance with what we call Natural Law. And let me repeat it over and over again: this Natural Law is simply our name for the method of God's doing things. We talk about law as though it were something. Law is nothing but a word, a name. It is a name for the uniformity of God's activity, that is all.

God makes me well, then, when I am sick, if it is possible, if I have not carried the breaking of the laws so far that the natural outcome must be added, disease and final dissolution. Suppose I wish to find truth. Does God suddenly, miraculously illuminate my mind? No. All the truth this world has ever discovered has been by the use of reason along the lines of universal growth and human experience. Never one scintilla of truth has come into this universe in any other way.

I must use my brains, then, and study God's methods, and slowly — as rapidly as I can — set my footsteps in the tracks that God has left as he passed by, if I wish to find his ways, come into contact with his realities. Suppose I wish to build up my moral and spiritual character. Will God make me an angel in answer to prayer, or in some sudden miraculous way? Not at all. "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling," says the apostle, "re-

membering that it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do." Literal truth again. Because there is only this one power in the universe, in the material, the intellectual, the moral or spiritual range; and that one power is God, and we do all that we do by discovering his methods and coming into harmony with his ways.

Suppose I am in trouble, suppose I have to face some great sorrow, suppose my heart aches and my eyes get blind so that I cannot see. Does this mean that God has forgotten me or become my enemy? Not at all. It means, perhaps, that I have temporarily got out of accord with his ways; but, if I have, I may feel sure that I can lean on his arm, even while I suffer. I can nestle my head in his bosom, even while my heart is breaking, and know that infinite pity and love and care brood over me and fold me round. And I can grow strong; and I can become heroic. I can make myself patient. I can become like a little child, and so be transformed into the beauty and glory of his likeness.

And, when the time comes to die, must I think that then, at any rate, God has forgotten me? Must I think of death as God's enemy and mine? No. There is nothing in this universe that is beyond the limit of his power or that can in any way contradict his purpose and design. I can walk out into the mists then, knowing that death is a part of the universal and divine order, knowing that there is light on the other side of that darkness, knowing that death, in the last analysis, means only birth into a larger life, knowing that the ones I have loved are over there, and, however bitter it may be for me to say good-by on this side, it will be unspeakable joy to clasp the hands held out on the other side.

So God is a very present help in sorrow, trouble. He is a very present help in death. He is my Father, my friend, now and forevermore.

Father, we thank Thee for this great confidence, based in reason, demonstrated as true, that we may rest in Thee, know that under us is Thy hand in support and round us are Thine everlasting arms. Amen.

NOTE.— In my words above in regard to prayer, I hope I shall not be misunderstood. I refer only to that kind of prayer which is supposed to *change God* or his plans; not to that which may change *our relation to God.*

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Giving as Related to Having and Being

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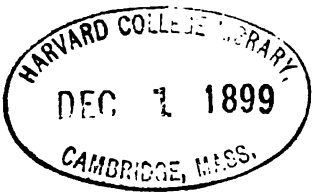

GIVING AS RELATED TO HAVING AND BEING.

I TAKE as my text from the twentieth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles the thirty-fifth verse,— "I have shewed you all things, how that so laboring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive."

It is worthy of note in passing that, if it were not for this speech of Paul, preserved by the writer of the Acts, we should not have had this wonderful saying from the lips of Jesus; for it is nowhere reported in either of the Gospels.

We are sending out this week our circulars, in the attempt to raise our annual fund to carry on our charity work, and for the extension of our religious ideas, both in the city and over the country. I take occasion of this, not to preach a begging sermon or a charity sermon, in any ordinary sense of those words. Whatever I say concerning these matters will be incidental to a larger theme. I propose to discuss with you the profound subject of giving as related to having and to being, to show you that only as we give do we possess, only as we give do we exist; and I am referring now not to money merely, but to giving of every kind and in every direction.

Philosophers sometimes discuss the question as to what things are *in themselves*. I have never heard that anybody has made the matter clear; and it seems to me that a thing in itself, so far as any knowledge of ours is concerned, is simply nothing at all. We know nothing whatever concerning things in themselves. All we know about them is what

they are as related to us, to our perception, to our uses. If there is anything off in the deeps of space somewhere, or if it is close by our side, that does not touch us, does not come into contact with us in any way, does not harm us or help us, then for us it does not exist, and does not concern us.

And things are what they are because of what they appear to be to us, and because of the injury or the help which they are to us. We can classify things under three heads. There are those things that injure; there are those things that are purely neutral, that do not help us or hurt us, so far as we can see; and then there are those that are useful to us. We wish to destroy and get rid of those that harm. The others we do not trouble ourselves about. It is only those things that give us something that are worth anything to us. They may give us what we ordinarily call wealth. They may give us help in any one of a hundred directions. They may give us merely pleasure; but they must give something in order to exist so far as we are concerned, and they must give something good in order for us to account them of any use.

When we come up into the higher range of animal life, we may perhaps make the same three-fold classification. There are animals in the world that, so far as we are concerned, we count as naught. It is difficult for us, perhaps, to understand why they exist at all. At any rate, we think they are of no good to us. They may be of positive injury, unless they are far removed from the life we live. Then there may be those that are purely neutral; and, so far as we can comprehend the problem, they do not harm us and they do us no good. Then there is that whole class of animals that are of inestimable service to man; and these alone we count valuable. We say they are worth something, because they give us something. They give us help, service, value, in many different directions. They give us at least entertainment, pleasure, if they cannot help on the industrial life of the world. They give us, as our household pets, companion-

ship, entertainment, gratitude and affection. But we count them valuable only as they give us something.

This is not selfishness, in any ordinary sense of that word. Unless they do bestow upon us something that we care for, they are of no use to us,— that is all.

Now when we take one step higher, and come to the level of human life, we must depart from the classification we have just been making. There are no merely useless and harmless men and women. Men and women must either hurt or help. They cannot take themselves apart from human life, and occupy a place that is merely neutral. If a man, no matter how he has come by his possessions, whether he has created them or inherited them,— and now I am using "possessions" in a larger sense than that of money,— no matter what he owns, if he tries to get off by himself and merely use so much of the common stock of the world's goods as he can consume, without doing anything in his turn to serve mankind, he is not a neutral person; he is a positive injury to man. He is preying upon the small inheritance of mankind, and making us poorer; and no man, if he is able, has a right to live except as he does something for the world.

Men hurt or they help. And why should we not say of men and women as we say of things and of animals, They are of no good to us, no good to the world, unless they give something to the world? I am not talking now of money. Money is simply one in the long catalogue of things that people can give; and there are things much more valuable than money that people can bestow.

Let us note, for example. A man helps the world if he creates some addition to its stock of food,— the farmer who performs his task faithfully. A man helps the world who creates something for its clothing, or if he adds to the fitness and beauty of its shelter, or if he helps to distribute fairly the things that the world has created, the substances that enter into the common stock of its life.

But there are higher things than these. "Man liveth not by bread alone": he needs the bread, the clothes, the shelter; but, when he has these, he is simply set free, released, so he can begin to be a man and render the world a man's service. A man helps the world who finds out a new truth, and adds it to the stock of intellectual accumulation. A man helps the world who simply inspires its enthusiasm for some high and fine thing. A man helps his fellows when he bestows upon them an atmosphere of comfort and of cheer.

I have people in mind,— it is like a ray of sunshine breaking through the clouds on an overcast day to meet them on the street or have them enter your room. I have people sometimes come and call on me; and, when they have gone away, I feel as though a surgeon had opened a vein and drained my blood and my life,— they take out of me all vitality. There are others,— I feel when they are gone as though I had been exhilarated by a cup of wine. They give help, inspiration, comfort, merely by being these things and carrying them about with them.

There are men who give examples of heroism,— do it unconsciously: the common men on the ferry-boat that was sunk the other day, calling out instinctively, because it was their nature, "Save the women and children first!": — the little boy down on the East Side, in the slums, who met with a serious accident, saying, as he was picked up and carried away, "Do not tell mother: it will only make her feel badly; and what's the use?" These outcroppings of heroism in the common people around us,— and there is hardly a day that they do not make themselves manifest,— these are magnificent specimens of giving to the higher and nobler life of the world.

Then take such a gift as that of Shakspere's. If he had made England the richest country on the face of the earth, he could not have added to her wealth as he did by merely writing his wondrous poems. Some musician who has

created a harmony that sings in the thought and the life of the world; some painter who has put upon canvas a little color and form that have come to be held of such inestimable value that no nation at any price would allow it to be carried beyond its borders; these are some of the higher things that people can bestow upon their kind.

Then take the twenty-third Psalm. No one has any idea who wrote it; but the one who did write it has conferred a gift upon mankind richer than an empire. What a magnificent bestowal was that of the life and the simple, yet sublime divine teachings of the Nazarene! Take the men who bestowed upon the world their great gifts of self-sacrifice,— the men who have stood and let the fires curl and crackle about them, and scorch and blacken their flesh, because they would be true! These are some of the gifts that men have been able to bestow upon their fellow-men.

Each man is under obligation to — what? To give to the world what he can,— which means, not only what he has, but what he is. And no man has any right to withdraw himself from his fellows. I care not how innocent, how high, how lofty the occupation may be in which he engages himself. If a man simply surrounds himself with pictures and a library, and spends his life in reading and study of the loftiest sort; if he comes into no relations with his fellowmen, and does not attempt to help the world,— he is living a life utterly inexcusable. He has no business to be selfish, no matter how innocent or how lofty the type of that selfishness may seem to him or his friends to be.

I wish to consider now for a moment an important point touching this matter of giving, which seems to me to be frequently misunderstood. We have been taught, perhaps, an extreme doctrine of sacrifice. We have been taught that it is good for a man to efface himself, to give himself so completely to the world as that there shall be no time to make himself worthy the gift. We need to draw a clear distinction between selfhood, or self-seeking in the sense of trying

to gain the things we need for our own nutriment and up-building, and that selfishness which is ordinarily called by that name, which is a positive injury to mankind. A man has a right to seek the very best things he can find for himself,— to seek money, clothing, houses, lands, whatever he can come by honestly and fairly. He has a right to seek intelligence and education. He has a right to make the most of himself in every department of his being. A right! I think it is his duty, not merely his right. For do you not see, unless a man is something, unless a man has something, he cannot give anything of much value, he cannot be of help to the world. A man must be strong if he is to lift the levels of his time. A man must be intelligent and educated if he is to teach and lead. A man must cultivate sympathy and love if he is to bestow them. A man must build himself up in all high and fine directions if he is to give anything of value.

And seeking in this sense is not selfishness: it is building up the selfhood, it is making a man strong and capable of rendering services to his time. That selfishness which is evil is being willing to get things and to use things either without regard to the rights and welfare of other people or in defiance of them. This is the only selfishness that is evil. There are those, I suppose, thousands of them in the world, who will get whatever they can that they want, no matter whether it belongs rightly to somebody else or not, no matter what the injustice wrought in the process of their possessing themselves of it; and then they will use it for their own indulgence, their own behoof, no matter whether other people suffer or do not suffer. The popular outcry against these people would lead us to suppose that they were in the majority in the modern world; but I do not believe this. There are such people, no doubt.

This selfishness and the desire to have and to be, so that I may come into helpful relations to my fellow-men,— this is so far from being selfish that it is the very condition of being

unselfish. It is quite possible, I think, for a person to devote himself so exclusively to other people that in a very short time his ability to be of use to them is diminished, perhaps taken away. I know friends of those who are sick, for instance, who will devote themselves so exclusively to the care of this sick friend that they undermine their own health, render themselves incapable of taking care of their sick friend, or get themselves into such a moody and unnatural, diseased mental and spiritual condition that they cannot be of such service to the sick friend as they might be if they preserved the healthy tone of their nature,— if they would go out into the sunshine and bring some sunshine back; if they would enter into relations of cheer with their healthful friends, so that they might bring cheer into the presence and room of the invalid.

This is only a hint for a person in any direction who sacrifices himself from the best possible motive to such an extent as to make the offering he has to give to the world poorer than it ought to be, and perhaps by and by of very little use at all.

One needs, then, to keep the balance between this extreme self-effacement and that true self-sacrifice which is consistent with having something to sacrifice.

There is another important point touching not only the matter of giving money, but of everything else; and that is that we shall understand the debt we owe to humanity, that we shall comprehend in what sense alone it is true that a man has a right to do "what he will with his own." Have I a right to spend my time just as I please? Have I a right to use my mental attainments just as I please? Have I a right to use my love and enthusiasm and powers in any direction as I please? Have I a right, if I have accumulated a certain sum of money, to spend it as I please or not to spend it at all? When I die, have I a right to dispose of it in my will just as I please? The answer to that is that it depends entirely on what you please.

Let us see. What is it of all that we are and all that we have that we personally and exclusively own? If you wish to disarm the mischievous socialism of the world, you must admit the fundamental principle of socialism, and consider philosophically that man is a unit of the larger life of society, and that society has a right to dispose of his life and of all that belongs to him. Whenever we pay a tax, we admit that society has a right to take a certain amount of our money. And how much? That depends upon the conditions: there is no limit. When we submit to a draft in time of war, we admit that society has a right to our bodily service and our life in the last extremity. Society is more important than any one of its individuals, just as my body is more important than my little finger. I cut my finger off to save my hand, and my hand to save my body. So society, in the last analysis, has a right to dispose of any particular individual as it pleases. This when its own safety or welfare calls for it.

And there are times when men are worth more for sacrifice than for anything else. There are times when that is the only thing that they are of value for. It is said that John Brown, with grim humor, after he had been condemned to die,— and you will remember that he went into the project on which he entered, knowing that that would probably be the end,— said to a friend, "Well, the probability is that I am worth more for hanging than for anything else." And he believed he was rendering a grander service to mankind in that way than he could possibly render in any other.

Let us look at it a moment now, and see. Suppose I am physically strong. May I pride myself on it? It is a gift from a long line of ancestors who, in the main, have kept God's laws and grown strong in the process. Suppose I have a remarkable brain power. That, again, is an outright gift. I have no right to pride myself on it. I did not make it. Humanity from the first beginning of ques-

tion and thought and analysis and the endeavor to comprehend, humanity — humanity has been building up the brain; and I have entered on the inheritance. Suppose I have a fairly good conscience, a keen sense of right. This, again, is an inheritance from a long line of ancestors who have denied themselves, who have tried to see clearly, who have tried to walk the straight path, who cared more for righteousness than for self-indulgence, who tried to be true and noble. I have no right to any spiritual pride merely because I find myself fairly honest. This is as much a gift to me as my physical strength.

And, then, as you look out beyond mere personality, and see the other things that we have entered on as an inheritance: Suppose I am able to appreciate books, literature, novels, poems, histories, essays,— this is a gift. And, then, humanity has created all the wonderful libraries of the world. And it has created not only the power of thought that has blossomed into these, but that mysterious, marvellous, inexplicable thing called speech, called writing, printing, language, by which purely arbitrary signs set my brain to singing and my heart to beating, and thrill me with the memory of heroic deeds, and make me proud of the past of my country, and the race. I look on a page, and there are some black marks on white, and they create for me a fairy wonder-world on which I enter; and my ideas are stimulated and lifted up and made strong; I am filled with aspiration and hope and cheer. All this a gift, the outright gift of this much-abused and contemned human nature of ours.

Take it in regard to the matter of money. You have created a large fortune. A business man in a neighboring city wrote me a letter the other day, discussing business successes and failures; and he said: "When I remember that at least ninety-five business men out of a hundred fail during their business life, I take no credit to myself for success. I have made up my mind simply that the lucky men are — lucky." That was his view of it; true, within certain limits.

But, no matter how you have come by your fortune; if you feel it is due to your own industry, your brain, if you owe nothing to the fact that you happened to be born at a particular time when there was an opportunity or happened to have been by when there was a favorable opening,—leaving out all these, what makes your real estate here in New York valuable? How does it happen that on Broadway there are some corners worth more than the gold dollars that it would take to cover them? Suppose the people should decide to move away from New York: who would buy a corner lot then? Suppose you should find out by the next census that the population of New York is diminishing: then your corner lot would be worth a good deal less than it is now,—which simply leads to the common-sense statement that it is the other people in New York who make your property of value. It is the fact that there are millions who want to live right here that makes your buildings, your warehouses, and your lands of such an inestimable price.

It is the labor of the world that has wrought out all the conditions for the production of your wealth,—all the inventors, the discoverers, those who have created the machinery, the means of transportation, the methods by which mines are dug out, by which all the sources of wealth are reached, and the materials turned into their higher and final value. In other words, you have not anything, from your body clear up through brain and heart and spirit,—you have not anything outside yourself of all you call your own that you do not owe to humanity, and back of humanity to God, who has created and wrought through humanity in bringing these things to pass. There is not an identical thing that you can lay your hand on and say, It is mine, and I have a perfect right to do with it as I please. You have not any such right. You have not any such right concerning your time. You have not any such right concerning your physical health, your intelligence, your heart impulses, your æsthetic taste, your moral ideals, or your spiritual nat-

ure. You have not any such right to anything you have or are. You have a right simply to use yourself and all you have in the noblest possible way and for the largest use and benefit of mankind.

I do not mean by this that the first faddist who comes along shall have a right to dictate to you what you shall do with your money: I do not claim that I have a right to do it; but I do claim that you are under the highest conceivable obligation to sit down with your conscience and your God, and consider the matter in the light of the clearest reason, and that the thing you are under obligation to do is the best you know.

When we speak of charity, it is generally understood to be a question of looking after the poor, the incompetent. In Old Testament days it was believed that the best thing a man could do was to give to every beggar that came along. Jesus himself is reported to say, "Give to him that asketh of thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn thou not away." I hear a great deal on all hands (and have all my life) as to the absolute perfection of the Sermon on the Mount,— but I have not found anybody, orthodox, heterodox, layman or minister, who pretended literally to obey it, —not one. Who is there that, when a man comes and takes his coat away, will run after him to give his cloak also? He would run after a policeman instead.

And so most of these precepts are not too literally carried out. The underlying spirit of them is superb and divine; but we do not attempt literally to obey them. So we have gotten over, largely at least, that kind of charity. Among the Jews, in the time of Jesus, charity was held in such estimation that giving to the poor and goodness were treated practically as identical; but the world has found that that kind of giving to the poor has simply turned poverty into a perpetual running sore, has made it a disease, an age-long disease, and instead of helping the world has hindered it.

To-day I think it a shame that a great, rich city like New

York should tolerate for one moment a beggar on its streets. We are rich enough, we are wise enough, to mend this condition of things. If a man is incompetent, either through physical or mental weakness, no matter which, so that he cannot take care of himself and his friends cannot take care of him, then I believe that he ought to be adequately cared for by the city or the State. If a man is a fraud, a professional beggar, a sturdy vagrant, he ought to be dealt with accordingly, and taught the principle that Paul has laid down, — that if any man will not work, neither shall he eat. The men who want work and cannot find it — and they are not very numerous at the present time — should be furnished somewhere with occupation. They could easily be. The men who claim to want work and who are all the time working to escape it should be compelled to find it, and, when found, to perform it.

This matter of charity can easily be disposed of if we deal with it scientifically and earnestly. I have noticed by the papers that, when some responsible person advertised for money to help a particular case of need, by the next day money had come in to such an extent that he had to advertise to stop it and return some of the money. Money could be had in New York at any moment to help genuine cases of need if only the possessors of money knew they were genuine. But you cannot expect a man whose time is worth a hundred dollars an hour, if not a minute, to look up these cases. We are not always wise enough, and have not the training; but the matter should be looked after, and charity should become a matter of the prevention of poverty instead of merely the mitigation of it, and the cultivation of drunkenness and every kind of dissipation. So much for that.

Now I am coming for a few moments to what may seem more like the kind of sermon you would expect from the subject of it. I wish to speak of the matter of our giving for the extension of our liberal Christian work in its various departments. I shall do it very briefly. I have had occasion

before to deprecate, both in public and in private, one thing which is common on the part of us Unitarians. Pardon me, if I speak thus personally; and, if I refer to some other denominations by way of contrast, it will only mean that I need the names in order to be understood.

I believe there have been no more generous givers in the history of this country than the Unitarians have been; but Unitarians have given less in proportion to numbers and means to their own causes, to the support of their own ideas and their own institutions, than almost any other religious body with which I am acquainted. Why? Because, as I had occasion to say in connection with another theme the other day, Channing, Martineau in England, some of the noblest men we have, have always been preaching against sectarianism. They have discouraged the idea of building up another sect. They have talked in that direction so much that at last the majority of our people have come somehow to feel that there is a good deal more virtue in giving to outside objects, to general education and philanthrophy, than in giving to support what they think is the truth. They fear, above all things, to be thought "illiberal."

There may be cases of the old orthodox churches giving to help build Unitarian institutions, churches, and schools; but I do not know them. I know of cities in this country, where there are Unitarian churches, where it is the commonest thing for them to give in support of other denominations; they are giving all the time.

As illustrating what I mean and the fruits of it. I spoke of this, I think, a year ago on another occasion; but I wish to do so again. There is a lovely town in this country where two boys were born and raised to manhood. They went on to great cities, and became wealthy. The Unitarian boy wished to do something for his town, and so endowed it with a magnificent public library. The Episcopalian boy, wishing to do something for his town also, built an Episco-

pal church. Now I am not going to say as to which did the nobler thing. I wish simply to point out the result of it. There are schools in that place; but the Unitarian church is old, not beautiful. It is in decay. It is losing its hold on the young people of the town; and the children of the schools, of Unitarian parents, are flocking to the Episcopal church, and being trained into Episcopalians.

Now the result of it is that the Unitarian church, which is the nursery and school of this broad humanitarianism, is allowed to die out; and, if you let the springs dry, where are your future rivers to come from, whose waters are to spread out and beautify the plain?

I know another case. In a city in this country one of our grandest ministers, while he was a minister of the church, raised, chiefly from Unitarian men and women, over a million dollars for the work of popular education. The result: education flourishing. All the other churches in that city strong. The Unitarian church not so strong as it was when this minister was there, struggling hard to keep itself and get along. Only one other little Unitarian church in the great city where there ought to be half a dozen.

It is all very well to give for these things; but, unless we give to cultivate and build up our own institutions, how are we going to continue to be the great power for speading these broad humanitarian ideas in the future?

Another illustration I am going to speak of. One of our noblest women has recently given her home and an endowment for the establishment of a Unitarian Boys' School. It is up at Tarrytown. We have secured as its teacher, its master, who has with him a splendid assistant, the Rev. Theodore C. Williams, formerly minister of All Souls' in this city. He is an able educator, one of the finest scholars we have in the denomination. The school will not be fairly open until next fall. He has, however, now five or six scholars, making up a little home school; and it is very

curious to note that one of these is a Congregationalist, one an Episcopalian, one a Presbyterian, and one a Catholic. This shows the breadth of the confidence that people have in this incipient school and its master.

But I happen to know of a wealthy man who predicts that the school will not succeed. Try it a year or two, he says, and see. Meantime I happen to know also that he has made provision in his will to give largely of his money to helping poor students in an institution under orthodox control. In other words, he predicts failure to the school, and — well, I wish he would help see that it does not fail.

So many people, when things are started, say, Let us see if you succeed; but, if you do not happen to, after you are through needing any help, we will come in. If the people who predict failure would only help create success!

And, then, on the other hand what are people doing? I have spoken of it a thousand times, and will as long as I live and with the last breath I draw. There are so many Unitarians who think it is broad and liberal for them not to care how their children are trained. They say, Let the child grow up, and then let him decide for himself. Do you do that in regard to anything else except religion? Do you care whether your child is taught whether two and two make five or not? Does not it matter whether he is taught what you profoundly believe to be true in religion or not? If it does not, then give up your religion. If it is fit for you to keep, it is worth teaching to your children — particularly when the very fundamental principle of Unitarianism is breadth and liberality in searching for truth.

But I know people who are sending their children to schools under denominational influence, where they are doing everything they can, and the parents know it, to make them something else besides Unitarians. And I have had people come to me and beg and plead with me to undo the results of their own carelessness and folly. They had sent their children to school, and found they were being trained

into something else than they thought; and then they would beg me to teach them the value of Unitarianism, which they had never taken the trouble to do themselves!

And at the same time I know Episcopal clergymen who say, "You Unitarians are sending your boys to our schools, and we will do everything we can to make Episcopalians of them." And they ought to if they believe it, just as you ought to make Unitarians of them if you believe it.

We are going to have, I trust, a grand school, in which the grand humanitarianism of religion in the light of the broadest thought and study, is going to be taught. If you believe in it, give it some money. If you believe that it is a good thing, do the next best, or perhaps the thing that is better still,— send your boys there, and help it succeed. Let us build up a school that we shall be proud of, and that shall be an inspiration all over the land.

Give, then, as you are able, and give to create the foundations on which shall stand that religion of love not only, but of light, that does not fear any truth, but that trusts in God freely and fully.

And now, at the end, the ideal manhood is that which is built up in perfection so far as the individual is concerned; the man who is strong physically, with a clear conscience, a brain trained to think, a heart consecrated to love of the noblest and finest things,— the man who, so built, gives himself utterly to the noblest service of his fellows.

Father, let us build ourselves into this ideal manliness and womanliness, and then let us know that we have freely received and that it is our duty freely to give; and so may we consecrate ourselves to helping Thee help the world. Amen.

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The Joy in Harvest

BY

Rev. ROBERT COLLYER

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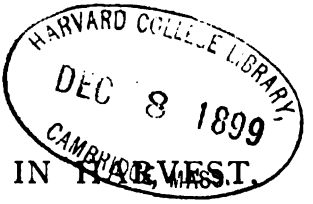

THE JOY IN HARVEST.

"They joy before Thee, according to the joy in harvest."— Isa. ix. 3.

There is no time in the year more welcome to some of us than the fall. We find our sense of its charm grows deeper as the years steal on toward our own November and the setting in of winter in our human life, because our love for this fair world changes as we change, and stands true to all the seasons.

And so my very earliest memories are those of a child's delight in the early spring, when we went out to find the first snowdrops and the willow blooms that glorify Palm Sunday, and after these the primrose and cowslip, in the old mother-land, with the hawthorn, the apple-blossom, the golden gorse, and the early wild rose. The spring time struck the first note of joy; and then, as my own youth passed away, the summer tides ran through my heart, deep answering unto deep, as they do in us all when our Mother Nature has her way with us, and we live close to her heart.

And then it was the fall; but here I found dismay,— not as yet in the season, for I was not there only in the anticipation.

I had fallen in with the thought that Nature grows sick in the fall, and the pillars of fire she lifts in the woods are the hectic flush which warns us that the end is near. So I had imagined, until on one rare day I fell in with a saint and seer a good deal older than I was then. It was a day when this flush and flame pervaded the woods and wild uplands; and so I began to talk in the old, sad fashion about this sight, and cited proof from the Scriptures touching the life of man, as "We all do fade as a leaf." But the old seer

was in the fall himself then, while I was still in the summer, and opened another argument drawn from his own experience. "I used to think very much as you do," he said, "when it was the summer-time with me. But now I love to believe that this season is the ripe splendor and glory of the year, and not the dissolution, but the consummation of all things, when we look well into the heart of Nature through the glass of the good providence of God."

It was a lesson for a lifetime. As these autumn days come with their message to us all, when the time is ripe for the flaming banners to flash out and all things have come to their fine and full perfection that are true to the time, we may say also, These are not the signs of dissolution, but of consummation, and not a threnody of death, but a psalm of life, when the mornings are silvered by the breath of the early frosts, and the flowers in our gardens seem like cups of fire which hold all the glory of the spring and the summer in their heart, and the air holds a golden mist and fragrance exhaled from the flowers, the fruits, and the harvest store.

In the spring the world all about us wakes up and rises to welcome the new day; but the winter dies hard on our zone, and we often ask each other whether this year there will be any spring worth the name. And through the summer the green things growing have to fight stern battles for their life. It is too dry, and they will wither on the stem. It is too wet, and they will rot in the furrows. The blight is on the berry, and the sting is in the plum. The apples are shaken down in the strong winds, and the roots in the gardens are in peril from the evil things that burrow in the dark. Mildew and rust are in the air; and the good man on the farm fears for his wheat, or wonders how the corn will fare in the early frosts, or is aware how the soft rains may turn to bullets of ice in the very heart of August, or the canker-worm may eat what the locust has left.

But the fall comes when the long fight is over, and we

know once more there is seed for the sower and bread for the eater. The grapes are full of new wine, and the barns bulge with the fruits of the harvest. The word of the Lord has come true: "I will fill thee with fine wheat." He has watered the hills from His chambers, and the earth is satisfied with the fruits of His hands. He has caused the grass to grow for the cattle, and the herb for the service of man. We are at one with the wise old husbandman, they told me about over the water, who farmed much land and never found fault with the seasons, but would tell you how he had noticed in his many years that what we call a bad season for one thing was good for another.

So we say, if the true heart is in us when the fall comes round: The divine Husbandman has been helping us, and working with us, stroke for stroke. This small planet of ours has been swinging through her orbit on no wild adventure. The wind, blowing where it listeth, has still been as the breath of the Most High; and His hand hath opened the chambers of heaven, and distilled the rains.

Let the year fall on sleep now: she has wrought nobly, and deserves her rest. This is the consummation. The trees aflame with gold and crimson, and the flowers, are the tokens to us that there is no more death but a change from glory to glory, as by the spirit of the Lord. And so I love the fall now, when I am in it, for the message of the consummation we find in its heart, which holds the promise of another spring, when

> "Earth is full of heaven,
> And every common bush afire with God."

It deepens and widens our joy, once more, to believe how much greater the harvest of God is, who satisfieth the desires of every living thing, than this we reckon on and weigh and measure for our own. "It will be a hard winter," ancient men say, who live on the land. "See what a wealth of things are ripening for the birds and the squirrels." The

foretelling does not always come true; but I like to hear them say so, because it reveals a certain faith in the heart, which dwells with these things, which look toward the promise, "As thy day is, so shall thy strength be," and reaches away down to the sparrow, and makes him our commentator for the divine lesson in the Sermon on the Mount, that every bird has his own provision and the harvests of heaven reach from pole to pole.

In the early days in Virginia they offered a bounty for killing the crows, because they ate up the new-sown seed. So the creatures fled into the wilderness for dear life, and waited on God's hand. And, then, in no long time the Assembly offered a bounty to get them back again, because it had become a question of no crow, no corn. They were watchmen, when the whole truth came out, and must have their wages.

And John Burroughs says, "The lark I was looking at the other day has a brain one-third larger by proportion with his body than Shakspere or Webster." It is the pledge that the great mother will see to her nurslings by fitting them forth so handsomely to see after themselves.

"We do not suspect," Darwin says again, "how ignorant we are of the conditions of existence among the creatures on which we are in the habit of looking down." But we may learn something, as we see how he the old saga calls the First Provider gives them all their meat in due season, and think how the harvest on which they rely has ripened day by day with ours. It ripens for them from the Iceland moss to the palm-trees on the equator.

The boys race with the squirrels for the nuts, and the birds for the berries. There is plenty for them all, and to spare. The king's messengers are among the highways and hedges, bidding the poorest and most forlorn to the feast; and all living things are bound up in the bundle of life with him, while man has only the pre-eminence and distinction of keeping order within the boundaries of his own commonwealth, and

then the holy Providence sees to the rest by nature's ample laws.

So nothing is made in vain, I say, when I touch the truth of the noble consummation,— nothing is made in vain. The Canada thistle is as beautiful and good in its own proper place as the rose of Sharon. And what a loathsome creature is your crocodile! What an uproar there would be if one was found in any of the great reservoirs, whence the water flows into the homes of our cities! They tell me they care for them as constantly in the reservoirs in Ceylon as our fine ladies care for those deplorable lap-dogs, because the water, under their fervid sun, would slay them but for the crocodile.

It is a hint, and no more, of the great harvest of God, which rounds and ripens through all the world, and holds within its zones a touch of his own infinity. There are creatures which need a forest for food and house-room. There are hosts I cannot see living within the cup of a lily or a violet. "These all wait on Him, and He giveth them their meat in due season"; and all's right with the world when we are right in it. Why should we grow sad, then, when the golden glow falls about us in these autumn days, like a garment woven in celestial looms?

It may well deepen and widen our joy, again, to think what a wealth of difference and distinction comes with this matchless bounty, and how it all answers to a need or ministers to a delight.

I had a dear friend once who would have nothing to do with strawberries which came to us in the winter, because, he held, they must ripen within a degree of his own garden, and in the sun, while they were only at their best when you can pluck them from your own vines. And, wandering with him once in the Old World, I noticed he would only eat what wholesome people were eating where we went, and drink, as a rule, what they were drinking. We drop in on a visit, he would say, but they have been here time out

of mind, learning what was good for them from the good mother Nature, and taking it from her hand. It was his way of touching the difference and distinction which lies along all the latitudes and longitudes, his conception of the trees of life, the seer saw, which yield their fruit every month, and whose leaves are for the healing of the nations.

They tell us the apple has never been found within the tropics of its own free will, or the orange where you can cut ice; and each is the match for the man who lives here or yonder. What do you miss in your fruit? I said once to a friend who lives far away to the Southward. The snap and tang of the winter, he answered. He was raised in Massachusetts; but the native man down there would never have made that answer.

We fight stern battles for our harvest stores, and win a wealth of sturdy manhood with them, which is making us the rulers of the world; but the children of the soft and sunny climes fight no such battles, and even the ants, where the sun is most fervid, turn their backs on Solomon. They will do nothing in the glare of the day or lay up stores for the winter which never comes. The bread-fruit, the palm, and the banana grow almost without a thought or care. The thinking is of close kin to the demand. The great domed brain of a man like Webster is never nourished forth on the bread-fruit and the palm. The salmon will only haunt cold waters: he is the match and marrow of cold weather.

We can exchange what we have for what they have, and so enlarge the boundaries of worth and enjoyment, but the main truth is this: that each zone reveals the wonder of bread enough, and then of the bread the man needs who dwells there, or he could not stay; and the saying of the prophet comes forever true: "I will hear the heavens, saith the Lord, and the heavens shall hear the earth, and the earth shall hear the corn and wine and oil, and they shall hear Jezreel," — the sown of God,

It is the next great joy, then,— this of the difference and distinction in which all His gifts are as the bread which cometh down from heaven; and how well our children answer to this law, who rebel against a gray monotony even of good things, when in our foolish wisdom we would shut them up in some theory or dogma we have stolen from a book perchance, done by a man who has quite forgotten his own childhood, or had none worth the name!

The joy of harvest should grow deep and radiant in all our hearts again, when we think of the bounty and blessing it brings to the nations as well as to our own home land.

The sun shines on no home within the American republic where there may not be bread enough, and to spare, if the breadwinner will see to it, and quit himself like a man; nor is there any home where the breadwinner is disabled or dead in which there will not be bread enough, when the need is once made known. While in the Old World there is hardly a poor man's platter on which you shall not find what is to him a new plenty because of the ploughman and herdsman of these States. And so the ploughman and herdsman, as good Jeremy Taylor says, are also ministers of God.

The long, sad cry of the poor for bread is stayed now, as it never was before, especially in our own mother-lands; and we are God's breadwinners and bread-breakers for the nations. But woe to us if we do not find some way to meet and master the shameful things which are done so often, through which every poor man's loaf is made lighter and our fair commerce shamed!

In the lawless ages they followed

> "The good old rule, the simple plan,
> That he shall take who has the power,
> And he shall keep who can."

They would swoop down from their strongholds then, and take toll of the merchants as they went on their way to the

markets; and they must submit, because might made right. We call the strongholds a "corner" now; but the things they do are often no better, and I wish I could believe not seldom they are no worse.

Still, the truth abides that our land is flooded with plenty. There is seed for the sower and bread for the eater. He who ruleth in the heavens hears the cry of all the creatures of His hand; and to all He not only giveth meat in due season, but the due meat. We can help the world, while still we help ourselves; and, if we stand true to the holy law of neighbor to neighbor and man to man, we can make the whole world brighter by our bounty, and cause it to rejoice in our joy.

And, then, we may well ask once more what truth these things, which are seen and temporal, can bring home to us all, touching the things which are unseen and eternal, and find this among the first we have glanced at for an instant already,—that this world of ours swings on in no blind fashion, but is held to its course by the hand of the Most High.

A fearful thing it is, indeed, to think of this home of ours threading its way among the constellations, balancing itself between the sun and the infinite dark void, and of the imprisoned elements, and what would befall it if they broke loose utterly; for where would these autumn glories be then, with the harvests and homes, and with them this marvellous human creature, man, He has made a little higher than the angels, and crowned with glory and honor?

It is only fearful, and food for any sad foreboding, when we leave out of the reckoning His divine presence and providence who cares not for the worlds alone, but for the lily and the sparrow, and touched me with a pang of delight long ago, when I saw the blue-bells on the crest of the Rhigi balancing themselves against the whole solar system, swinging free in the fresh wind of the morning, wet with the rain and resplendent in the sun.

This earth of ours is true to her seasons because God is true and steadfast to His divine purpose and plan, from whom all things spring, as the fountain springs from the great deeps, and has made no mistake in His making or lost any thread in the guiding. Let us be sure of that, as we rejoice before Him in the joy of harvest. It has never been a lost world, but found rather to a diviner purpose always, and was never so radiant with His presence as it is this morning.

We may lay this truth also to our hearts as we grow glad for the harvest home: that, while my joy and yours rests in Him, it rests also in its own due measure with us, as all joy must. We have to win by good honest striving. All the harvest homes worth the name are the fruit of such striving, as well as of the help of God. I know about where to look for the poor, scant harvests a thousand miles from where I stand, and I know the reason — which must still be guarded by Paul's tender caution, "who made thee to differ"— why there is an abounding grace there, and yonder only disgrace; and this truth lies within the whole sum and substance of our life.

All the harvests are ours for the striving; and do not you forget that, especially, who are in the spring-time of what you may be and do. We may have a poor lot to work on. It need not stay poor, if we add, to our faith, virtue. We may think we are poor sticks. So the poor stick of a willow might have said, my friend left on the edge of a marsh and thought no more about it. But the wetness touched the dry thing, and the sun and the rain fell on it, so tiny spikelets shot forth when the spring came. And, when he took me to see it after many years, there was a grand bole, and waving banners of green, and the birds were nesting and singing far aloft, for joy of the tree.

I love to think of another truth these golden days bring home to us all,— the truth that some fruits ripen early and some late, and some flowers shed their white glory in the

spring, while some endure right on to the frosts of winter; for this is the law of their diverse life. Yet how rich the year is through the whole wealth of them, the bounty, the beauty, and the fragrance! And so shall we not think of the ingathering of the harvest of heaven and the angels, All too soon, we moaned,— all too soon! Why must they be taken? But the blessed truth remains that we had them once, and have them still. They are our treasures laid up in heaven. They did come to bless us,— the fair fruits and flowers of the spring-time and the summer,— and we can sing with the great singer, then,—

> "This truth came borne with bier and pall,
> I felt it, when I sorrowed most,
> 'Tis better to have loved and lost
> Than never to have loved at all."

And one last word for the charity that never faileth. How forbidding some of the good fruits of the harvest are on the surface, how sweet and good in the heart! And how evil a thing it would be to judge them only by what we see or to judge them before their time!

The fall days come, the frost mellows them, or you get at the heart of your hard shell; and then how sweet and good they are, to be sure! It is of men like Milton they remind us, and Johnson or Stephen Girard, and hosts of men besides we may have known, who needed all the sun there was, and a touch of the frost, too. And, then, that time should shred away the shell, the sweetness lay not on the surface: it was deep in the heart, guarded by the knots or the spikes. I say we have all known such men, hard and angular or sharp to our touch as a chestnut-burr; and there would have been no great worth, perhaps, if we had broken through the shell before the time.

I made one of these some amends when he was dead, but still repent me of my harsh judgment while he was alive. No man more honest, but he seemed to be all hard shell; and, then, men came to me and told me of things he had

done in the later years, and done in secret, the angels of God might envy. Then I said in my heart, If I am worthy to meet that man in heaven, when I get through down here, I will beg his pardon; and I still mean to do it. It was the hard shell or the chestnut-burr I was scolding and fretting about, and wist not of the sweet and shining heart.

Yes, and let these days teach us some good lessons of faith and hope for those that seem to our poor seeing to hold no worth in them at all. Long ago I would be busy in my overtime among the flowers, and got some seed one spring of a rare and unique sort to sow and raise a wealth of beauty and fragrance from my seeds. But the soil was not good, and the sun came late on that side the house. So the promise did not come true. Still, a cup or so did flash forth into beauty and grace; while, when the frosts came, I found a seed or two in the wreck of my hope, and said: I will save these for another summer, and try again. These seeds are the proof there will be another summer, if we had no other proof. So the spring came, when, having learned something by my failure, I set them in a richer tilth that lay fairer to to the sun; and, lo! my flowers were the glory of my garden.

It is the everlasting gospel of the grace of God which touches our whole life. Not a plant or flower in His garden just like another, and no best without a better hanging in the heavens we must capture and bring down. Yes, and the soil, how harsh and poor it is for some! and the sun, how late he shines for some! and the things that stab and sting, how cruel they are to root and stalk in some! And, then, we say, What a wreck! But this is God's husbandry as well as ours. "All souls are mine," saith the Lord; and, if we will but turn to him, as my poor flower turned to what sun there was, and make the best of the harsh and poor soil in which our life may be set to grow, then there shall be a seed saved and sown again for the

> "Immortal life in never-failing worlds,
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EDWARD A. HORTON.

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SERMONS OF M. J. SAVAGE

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WHO ARE CHRISTIANS?

WHO are Christians? is the question that I am to try this morning to answer. For my text I take two passages of Scripture: first from the Acts of the Apostles, the eleventh chapter and the twenty-sixth verse,— "The disciples were called Christians first in Antioch"; and the second, the words of our Master recorded in the seventeenth chapter of Matthew and the sixteenth verse,— "Ye shall know them by their fruits."

There has been, as you are aware, a wide-spread discussion going on in the New York newspapers during the fall and so far into the winter concerning great fundamental problems of religious thought and life,— as to what constitutes religion; as to who is a Christian; who has a right to think that he knows anything about God or about a future life. Questions like these are in all the air.

It seemed to me, then, a favorable time for us to reconsider this one of the greater themes, to find out, if we may, what is the essential thing in Christianity, and who may claim to wear that name as a description of his ideals and his purposes, if not of his actual life.

It will throw a little light on the subject at the outset if we find out what particular thing it was that constituted a man a Christian, say, fifteen or twenty or thirty years after the death of Jesus. Who was a Christian in the time of Paul? You remember that Paul's great message, the burden of his preaching, was to convince men that Jesus was the Christ. Read the life and work of Paul, and you will see that the great thing that he aimed at was that,— to prove to men that Jesus was the Christ.

Now what was the difference at that time between a Jew and a Christian? The Jew believed in the same God that the Christian did. The fundamental principles of ethics, of right and wrong, were very much the same. The rituals had not been very largely developed among the Christians, so that most of the Christians of the time, who had been Jewish in their parentage, still maintained the rites and ceremonies of the Jewish religion. All the difference was here. The Jew believed that a Messiah was to come,—some one sent of God to deliver the Jewish people and to make them central among the people of the earth. The Christian, on the other hand, believed that the Messiah that the Jew expected had already come, and that Jesus was he. That was the chief difference.

Of course, another difference would begin to grow and make its influence felt very rapidly. He who came to believe that Jesus was the Christ would naturally more and more be dominated by the spirit and temper and ideals of Jesus, and would thus more and more be made over, so to speak, transformed, into the likeness of Jesus. For we naturally tend to become like the ideal which we admire. But the principal thing, I say, that separated a Jew from a Christian was this belief that Jesus was the Messiah that the Jews had expected.

You see how simple it was. No other doctrinal question at that time was raised, no ritual question was raised, no principle of church authority or organization was in question: it was purely this which I have pointed out.

But, as years went on, and churches were organized, processes like this began to manifest themselves. The doctrines would naturally become more developed, more clearly outlined, more fixed in form. The Church would become organized after some pattern. It seems to me — I do not impose this in any authoritative way upon you — that the earliest church organization was what is called the Congregational; that is, the believers got together in a little body

and organized themselves. No principle of organization was revealed; for all the talk about presbyters and bishops that we have had in later days had not yet been heard. There was no record of the New Testament books in which these terms appear. The old men who were regarded as wise and able to give safe counsel naturally were appointed leaders. They were called in the Greek Presbyters. And so we find, perhaps, in one direction a church organized after what might now be called the incipient form of the Presbyterian organization. Somewhere else one man of commanding influence would come to the top, who would be spoken of as an overseer, an *episcopos*, which is simply the Greek form for the word "overseer." So we have the word "bishop." And as the overseer, or episcopos, or bishop, of some great church would naturally, after a while, rise to commanding influence, not only within the limits of his own organization, but without the limits of his country, he would become a man to whom would be submitted important questions. So we have the Episcopal office of superintendent, or overseer.

These processes were perfectly natural: they were not revealed. There was no organization of the Church, anyhow, in the time of Christ, during his life. These things grew up after purely natural human principles. Rome was the centre of the great empire of the time; and he who came to commanding influence in the Church of Rome would naturally be the one to whom the churches in the whole region roundabout would refer disputes concerning matters of doctrine or ritual or practice. And so the Bishop of Rome came to be the superintendent of a whole wide, extended, and indefinite region, just as naturally as a California pine grows to be taller than some other types of trees.

But very soon a change came. Constantine, a Greek in blood and in training, came to the throne; and he transferred the capital of the empire from Rome to Constantinople, the new city founded and called after his own name. And very

naturally after that the Bishop of Constantinople would claim that he was at the centre of the empire and that the headship of the Church belonged to him. Thence rivalry and dispute between Rome and Constantinople for hundreds of years.

There were differences in nationality and temper. The Greek was celebrated in the ancient time for his intellectual, speculative tendency. The Romans were celebrated for a rough-shod way of settling things, for power of organization and dominance; and they have proved themselves mightier, perhaps, in that direction than almost any other people of the world.

There were doctrinal distinctions between the East and the West, between the Oriental and Occidental Christians. There is one term which has no meaning for us to-day, practically; and, if I were to describe it, you would hardly know what I was talking about; and yet it played so great a part that it was one of the mightiest influences in cleaving Christianity asunder. The Oriental Christian believed the Holy Spirit proceeded from the Father alone. The Occidental Church, with Rome at the head, said the Holy Church proceeded from the Father and the Son. The Latin *filioque* represented the distinction. And this clause in the creed was one of the grandest reasons why to-day there is a Greek Church and a Roman Church.

But the chief thing, I think, was the rivalry between the bishops as to which should have the headship in Christendom. The contest was carried on until 700 or 800 A.D., and then there was a final separation; and since that day the Church has been divided in two instead of its being regarded as one. And they have divided to such an extent that the Greek Church will deny the right of the Roman Church to call itself in the true sense of the word "Christian," and will have the most serious doubts as to the possibility of salvation for one of its adherents. While, on the other hand, the Roman Church claims the right to define

what Christianity is, and claims — what it has never been — to be Catholic, or universal; and it denies the possibility of the followers of the Greek Church being saved in another life.

So, then, the Greek Church and the Roman Church deny each other the right to the full name of Christian.

In the sixteenth century came that great revolution which we call by the name of Protestantism. The Greek Church and the Roman Church both, while anathematizing each other, agreed in anathematizing all the Protestants, so that the Protestant churches, according to their standards, have no chance of salvation in another life.

Then there arose the curious spectacle of Protestantism breaking up into almost innumerable fragments, each one of these claiming that it had the special right to the name Christian, and a special claim to defining the word and to setting forth the only perfectly safe terms of salvation. So Baptists and Methodists and the Anglican Church and the Episcopal Church of this country, and the Presbyterian and Congregational,— and so many different kinds of all these that I should weary you in attempting even to classify them, — have come into existence; and each one is sure that it is right and all the others are wrong.

The matter has reduced itself to the extreme absurdity almost that is set forth by that trite story of the old Scotch woman who thought that nobody in the world would be saved but the members of her church. She had serious doubts as to whether anybody in that church except herself and her husband Sandy would be saved; and now and then she had her doubts about Sandy.

This is the logical outcome of this exclusiveness in regard to admitting people to the right to be called Christians, and this spiritual assumption and arrogance that attempts to represent God on earth and say who shall and who shall not be the recipients of his favor and cherish in their hearts his eternal hope.

Of course, all these churches, Roman, Greek, and all the orthodox Protestants, unite in thinking that it is extremely doubtful whether Unitarians have any right to be called Christians and as to whether they have any right to hope for salvation in another life.

Now I wish to go back again for a few moments, and raise the question, for the sake of clarifying the subject in your minds, as to what are the essential things in Christianity. Are they — as has been held for the last five hundred years very strenuously by most Protestant churches — the creeds? Are there any creeds that a man must accept in order to be a Christian? Let us take for a moment the great historic creeds. Just refer to them and see where we are.

The oldest of the creeds, as I had occasion to tell you two years ago, is the Nicene. That was formulated in its present shape about the year 325; that is, in the early part of the fourth century. Of course, certain phrases of it, certain of its teachings, were held possibly away back in the first century; but the Nicene Creed was not formed until the fourth century. Now, if any Church to-day tells me that I must accept the Nicene Creed in order to be a Christian, have I not the right to ask what became of all the Christians that lived in the world in the days of Christ and until the Nicene Creed was formulated? Are they not saved? Were they not Christians? What has become of them?

The next oldest creed is the Apostles' Creed. It did not come into its present shape until about five hundred years after Christ. So the apostles had nothing whatever to do with it. Must I believe the Apostles' Creed? Then what about the apostles themselves, who did not believe it and did not know anything about it? What of their destiny? What of the members of the first great churches? Where are they now? Have they been saved? Are they Christians? Were they Christians?

The next great creed is the Athanasian. That was

formulated in its present shape about the eighth or ninth century; and yet it has a clause, popularly known as the Damnatory clause, that says that everybody who does not accept it in its entirety must undoubtedly be lost. Now what of the people for eight or nine hundred years who did not know anything about the creed and did not accept it in its entirety because they knew nothing about it? Were they all lost? Were they not Christians?

You see the absurdity in which we are landed the moment we say that any man-made creed is essential to the salvation of any human soul.

The great creed of the Episcopal Church, the Thirty-nine Articles, was, of course, very late in its formation.

We must then waive aside the creeds, it seems to me. Is it necessary to Christianity that a man should practise any particular set of rites or ceremonies? Here, again, we find ourselves face to face with a very serious difficulty. I wish you to understand that I speak with all literalness when I say that there is not a rite, a symbol, a ceremony in the Church to-day which is not older than the Church, which is not pagan in its origin. The cross was a religious symbol in many pagan nations before Christianity was born. Holy water, the eucharist, baptism,— almost all these that are sacraments and symbols in the Christian Church to-day and are regarded as of prime importance were known and practised in ancient Egypt and in other nations hundreds, perhaps thousands of years before the Nazarene was born. If these are essential to Christianity, then Christianity is much older than Christianity, and existed in the midst of Paganism.

Shall we say that any special type of organization is necessary to make man a Christian? Must we have an Episcopal organization, with the apostolic succession, a clergy who have been sent forth and appointed by those who were in their case set forth and appointed first by some one that preceded them in a line reaching back to the

apostles themselves? Must we have a Presbyterian organization? Is that absolutely necessary to Christianity? Must we have a Congregational one? Is that absolutely essential?

Let us note that, as I said, Jesus himself organized no church and left on record not one single command as to organizing one or as to how it should be organized if it ever were organized at all. These different organizations have grown up out of certain conditions, perfectly natural, taking the shape that seemed to fit the want or the need or the ideal of the time; and it seems to me I need spend no more time upon it than simply to say that it cannot in the nature of things have anything whatever to do with the question as to whether a man is a Christian. If it does, then the apostles and all the early churches were not Christians. Where, then, do we land?

We must waive these things aside, and try to find that which is essential in Christianity somewhere else. The word "Christian" as originally used was first a popular nickname, just as the word "Methodist" is, just as the word "Unitarian" is,—a word not chosen by the followers of it as descriptive of them, but thrust upon them by the people of the time. The early people in Antioch came to be called Christians because they believed that Jesus was the *Cristos*, the Anointed One, the Jewish Messiah. The name, then, cannot be of first-class importance to us; and, if we wish to find out that which is essential to Christianity, we must look a little deeper than the name.

Now I want to ask you, in all seriousness, as to what is your ideal of what a man ought to be and a man ought to do. I will tell you mine, and see if many of you agree with me. The most important thing in all this world, in my judgment, is love,—love for the highest ideal that we know and love for our fellow-men, love for them whether they are lovely or not; love for them because they are capable of becoming lovely, and because the loveliest thing we can do

is to help on the process of developing them out of their ugliness into the divine beauty, which means only the unfolding of the germ of godlikeness which is the essential thing in every human person his child.

The worst thing in this world is that supercilious egotism, whether it be based on intellectual or spiritual culture, so supposed, or on æsthetic tastes, or on anything else that sets us apart from our fellows, and renders us incapable of doing them a service. The grandest thing, the divinest thing on earth, is love; for love only has in it the power of lifting up, transforming, glorifying, the human race.

The man who hates is an enemy to his race and to his God. The man who is indifferent is an enemy to his race and of no service. The man who sets himself apart because he thinks he is better than other people is an injury to his race. It is only the man who comes into contact with people, not because of necessity they are agreeable to him, but for the sake of making them agreeable, who is the God-like man.

The next thing of importance is light, truth. I have preached the importance of truth in my life so much that it is not an uncommon thing for me to find myself criticised by all my enemies and by many of my friends because I place so much emphasis on it. They say, You are enlarging the intellectual side of things and making that of undue importance. Let us see. Pardon me if I repeat an illustration. I want to make it clear as to which I make more important of the two, love or truth, love or intellect. I do not see how I can tell you which is the more important, because neither of them is worth much without the other.

Suppose you wish to climb Mont Blanc. Would you before the start raise the question as to which was more important, physical strength in order to go up to the top, and the impulse to go, or a competent guide who knows the way and who can keep you from falling into a crevasse or over a precipice? You might have the strength and the

will to go, and yet wander on the mountain and be lost. You might have a competent guide without the strength; and, though he might perfectly know the way, you would never reach the summit.

If you were in mid-ocean, on board a great ocean liner, would you raise the question as to which is the more important,— steam in the boiler that is capable of turning the shaft, or the compass and a competent captain to direct the movements of the ship? If you had all the steam power in the world without compass or captain, you could move,— move with tremendous impetus; but where? You might run against an iceberg, collide with some other vessel in a fog, run on to the rocks, wander in a circuit month after month and get nowhere.

Suppose, on the other hand, you have a compass and a captain and no steam power. You would know perfectly where you were; but you would stay there or drift with the winds and the tides. You would have no power of impetus, of movement.

Which is the most important? It is absurd to ask the question. You need the impetus, the power that will move you; and then you need direction as to which way to go. This world in the past has had, shall I say, too much emotion? No, but it has had an amount of emotion entirely disproportionate to its rational guidance, in industry, in government, in sociology,— everywhere. In religion, people have been going, and crying out that the great thing was to shout, Hallelujah! and go. But they have been following a false track, getting into difficulties, repeating old blunders, coming out nowhere over and over and over again, until it is weary and heart-sickening to read the record; and why? Simply because they have not had sufficient rational guidance, so that they knew where they were going, or to what end.

I saw the other day an anecdote of a professor in England — I think Dr. Van Dyke used it as an illustration —

who was in a great hurry, after he arrived at the station of the town where he was to lecture, to get to the hall. He was so absorbed in his lecture and the desire to get there in time that he got into a cab, and said to the driver, Now hurry just as fast as you can. So the cabman started, and drove for half an hour or so in all directions. And by and by the professor realized that he was not getting anywhere. So he put his head out of the window, and said, Where are you going? And the cabman answered, I don't know, sir. You gave me no directions; you simply told me to go.

Now the world has been going under the impulse of this great emotion; and where it was going and to what end it could not have told if you had asked the question. So there can be no discussion, it seems to me, as to which is the more important, love and impulse, or intellect in the light of experience that tells us what to do with our emotion and our love.

The one thing that we need to do is to help our fellow-men. Love and light may save the individual. But we want to do more than save the individual: we want to save the mass,— save mankind. So that man is not good — in our modern conception of the word — unless he is good for something, unless he is good for his fellow-men, unless he is of service to his time. If I help a man's body, well and good,— feed it, clothe it. But I have helped him only as an animal, if I stop there. If I help his intellect, help him to know the truth, I have not done him any very great service unless I go further. If I help him in his conscience, his sense of right and the impelling power of love,— if I can communicate that, then I have taken the first great step towards transforming him into the divine image. If I can help him become like God, and recognize the fact that he is a child of God, then, indeed, I have rendered him the supremest service of all.

The ideal man, then, is the man who loves, and the man who knows how to apply his love power and impetus in such

a way as to help save, transform, develop, and glorify mankind.

Now is this love, truth, service,— is this the essential thing in Christianity? I think it is; and I think the man who embodies these three things is a Christian, whatever he believes else, whether he has any rites or ceremonies or symbols or not. However he may organize himself with his fellows, or whether he may organize at all or not, the man who loves and cares for truth and devotes himself to the service of his fellow-man, lifting him into the highest life and trying to transform him into the divine likeness,— that man is my ideal type of man; and, if anybody says that that is not Christianity, then he condemns not this, but his type of Christianity.

Shall we say, then, that there were no Christians before Christ, and that there are no Christians outside of what we call Christendom? Augustine was wiser than that. I have not been able to put my finger on just the phrase; but I can give you his idea correctly. He refers somewhere to that which has always been in the world from the beginning, and which, in these latter days, we have come to call Christian. So Augustine, the old Church Father and theologian, recognized that what he regarded as important and essential in Christianity was older than what had gone by that name.

There is a verse in the famous play, "Nathan the Wise," written by the German philosopher, Lessing, that I wish to give you. Nathan is a Jew, and he is depicted as an ideal and noble man, who is conversing with a Christian; and at last the Christian says, "Why, Nathan, you are a Christian." And then Nathan replies, "What makes of me a Christian in your eyes makes you in mine a Jew." Both had the same grand human ideal. One called it Judaism, the other called it Christianity.

I hold in my hand here a sentence I wish to read to you. If there is anything finer in spirit and purpose in any book on the face of all the earth, I wish you would find it for me;

for I place this as high as anything I have ever known: "Never will I seek or receive private, individual salvation. Never will I enter into final peace alone; but forever and ever and everywhere I will live and strive for the universal redemption of every creature throughout all the world."

Where do you suppose that came from? It is from a Buddhist liturgy in China. Gautama, the Buddhist, says in one place, "Evil is never overcome by evil, but always by good." Is not that just as fine as Paul saying, "Overcome evil with good"? Is it not the same thing? And is it any the worse saying of Paul because it was said in India five hundred years before Paul was born? Confucius said the Golden Rule,—"What you do not wish others to do to you, do not you to them." Is that any worse because it was said five hundred years before Jesus was born, in China? Socrates met death as forgivingly as did Jesus himself, telling his condemners and accusers that he did not blame them, that they were doing what they thought was right. Is that poor because it preceded Christianity by several hundreds of years? The Stoics bore the evils of the world bravely and uncomplainingly. Is that any worse than what we call "Christian patience"? I think, for example, that, if I were a pagan, I should resent it, when some virtue that I was perfectly familiar with among my own people was labelled "Christian virtue," as though nobody but a Christian had ever heard of it. I do not know of a single virtue that is not human, that has not been splendidly illustrated by people beyond the pale of Christianity.

Shall I say that generosity is Christian exclusively? When I read the life of a man like Sir Moses Montefiore, the Hebrew, shall I pick out these different splendid examples, and say that they are only splendid vices because the man did not wear my label?

I believe, indeed, in Christianity. I love to wear the name, because I believe that Jesus was the one unique and most splendid illustration of the things which I admire.

And I never loved him so, I never honored him so, I never was ready to offer him that almost worship, if not quite, which we bestow upon the splendid illustrators of our ideals, as I am to-day. I confess I could not honor him much if I thought he was God. I do not believe that God would shrink and complain in the face of death. I do not believe that God would go through what seems to me a theatrical spectacle of suffering on the cross. But, when I think of him as a man, perhaps really doubting for a moment at the last as to whether he had been right; when he utters that terrible heart-cry, "My God, why hast thou forsaken me?"; when I think he was a man, ready to die for his truth whether his mind or his hope was clouded or not,— then I can bend my head and fall upon my knees in his presence, long to clasp his hand as that of my older brother, proud of him as leader and teacher and master, giving him my heart's allegiance, and dedicating to him my life in order that I may teach the splendid truths he illustrated, and try to bring the world to an appreciation of his ideals. For thus the light and the love and the service of God will come,— that is, God's kingdom,— and all evil will be passed away.

Father, let Thy love and light be ours, and let us be proud and glad that we can help Thee in the service of our fellows. And, then, if they will not let us wear the name Christian, we will wear the spirit of the Christ as our garment; and we will take his love into our hearts until it transforms us into his image. Amen.

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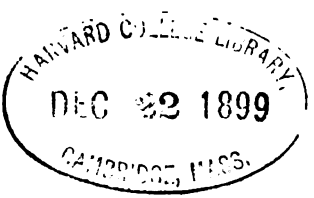

THE ETHICS OF THE WORLD SITUATION: ENGLAND IN SOUTH AFRICA, AMERICA IN THE PHILIPPINES, AND BOTH FOR MANKIND.

I HAVE chosen two passages of Scripture as touching in some distant way the principle that will underlie my discussion. The first is from the eleventh chapter of the Gospel according to John, the fiftieth verse,— "It is expedient that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not." And the other is from the tenth chapter of the Gospel according to Matthew, the thirty-fourth verse, —"Think not that I am come to send peace on the earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword."

The first of these verses was uttered by Caiaphas, the high priest, in his argument in condemnation of Jesus,— an unimpeachable principle of truth urged in defence of an infamous action. The other is the word of Jesus himself, uttering a principle of world-wide application.

Whenever a higher truth, whether it be social or religious or political, is cast into the midst of a mass of men, there is inevitably struggle and conflict until some sort of readjustment of affairs is reached. The "Prince of Peace" we love to call the Nazarene; and yet, though he came nearly two thousand years ago, we seem to be as far away from peace as ever. War, bloodshed, untold expense in the way of the armament of nations,— these things on every hand. And yet I trust that none of us have lost faith in the idea that there is "one far-off, divine event," and that even these things are lifting and moving the world towards it.

So much only by way of comment on my texts.

I have not chosen so great a subject as this because at the present time it might be regarded as sensational; still less, that it may give me an opportunity to touch, even in the most distant way, on party politics,— with which, as I hold, the pulpit has nothing to do. I have chosen it because it seems to me the most important ethical problem facing the world at the present time, because it seems to me that we are in the midst of one of the great crises of history; and I wish to do what I may to help on clear thinking, and that which ought to follow clear thinking,— right action. I believe it to be the present duty of every man to try at least to have an intelligent opinion and to utter it, to take sides, to declare what he believes, and to help convince the world that he is right.

I take no dogmatic position this morning. Some of you may think that before I am through I shall speak with too much earnestness of conviction. But that I hold is my duty,— to utter my highest conviction with whatever power I possess. I shall not dogmatize. I challenge your thinking; and I challenge your action. I do not ask you to agree with me unless I shall be able to make that which I hold appear the better reason. I do ask you, however, to think, and think seriously.

Ethics is always a social fact. If you could isolate a man so that he should be utterly cut off from his kind, have no personal relations with anybody, he might be a vicious man. He might break the laws of his own nature; but he could not, in the true sense of the word, be an immoral man, because morality concerns our relations with somebody else. Morality was born when a man loved a woman, and when the father and the mother loved the child, and when out of these facts grew the family and the wider relations of mankind. Morality is strictly social.

A man owes his first duty to the wife and the child. But by and by the family enlarges, until you have the patriar-

chal type, which is represented well enough for our purpose by Abraham and the hosts of followers that claimed kinship with him, and called him in some general way "Father." In that patriarchal condition of affairs, morality was limited to the family. The ordinary member did not feel that he was under any obligations to another patriarchal family. Indeed, if their interests seemed to be in conflict, he held it to be his duty to play the part of an enemy.

Then out of the family grew the tribe; and we have the ancient cities, like Athens and Sparta. Moral ideas were then confined within the limits of the nation, the city, the people. Athens did not feel that she owed anything to Sparta, nor Sparta to Athens. Indeed, some of the greatest teachers of the time — Plato, for example — held it to be a virtue for an Athenian to hate a Spartan. They had not yet risen to any conception of there being such a thing as identity of interests among different peoples. The idea was prevalent that to humiliate, to weaken, to do what you could to destroy another people was the best way to benefit your own. And even in modern times we are only beginning to outgrow that idea. Lord Nelson taught that the greatest duty of an Englishman was to hate a Frenchman. The ordinary Frenchman considered it the grandest sign of noble patriotism to hate Englishmen. We have not yet outgrown the limits of that kind of patriotism.

Mark you, I am not saying a word against patriotism. A man who does not love his own household, and pretends to love something beyond its limits, we rightly treat with suspicion. The man who does not love his country, but claims to love mankind, we look upon as a shallow impostor and charlatan. One must love his family, love the group of his own people, love his own city, his own State, love his own nation, but grow up to a higher level even than that, and reach out beyond the limits of this love and embrace whatever is human. One of the grandest sentences ever

falling from human lips fell from the lips of Thomas Paine; and so grand was it thought to be that it was inscribed on the pedestal of the statue erected to William Lloyd Garrison on Commonwealth Avenue in Boston. It is to the effect that "the world is my country, and to do good is my religion."

That did not mean that Thomas Paine neglected the welfare of his own country. He only believed that the true-hearted man should love his country so much that the love should overflow, and recognize the right relations in which that country ought to stand to every other people on earth.

I wish to discuss this morning, so far as I may by certain concrete illustrations, this world-wide ethical problem, and to show that, when the individual life is needed for the larger life of society, it must be paid. When some smaller national claim stands in the way of a larger human claim, it ought to give way. It is not merely submitting to force. It is bowing in the presence of righteousness.

Let us first consider these ethical questions as I think them involved in the presence of England in South Africa to-day.

I little thought when I gave the notice of this subject last Sunday that I should treat it under the shadow of what I regard as such sad, sad news;* but this only makes the problem that faces us the clearer and the more insistent, as I view it.

First let me address myself for a moment to a certain natural feeling of irritation and hostility on the part of Americans as against the average Englishmen; for it certainly does exist. I meet it everywhere. We look back and remember the great struggle of 1776; and we are apt to think that England is our hereditary foe, because of the strife, so bitter and so prolonged, at that time. I meet American gentlemen now and then who have a distaste for Englishmen on account of some individual Englishman they

* Referring to the morning's news of English losses under General Buller.

happened to meet abroad, and who, perhaps, would be glad to see England rebuffed, because there is a certain satisfaction to their personal feelings in such an experience. I have met disagreeable Englishmen abroad; but, if I am to measure my feeling towards any particular nation by the number of disagreeable people that I have met abroad, I should have a peculiar enmity towards America. I have met more disagreeable Americans abroad than I ever have people of any other nation on the face of the earth. And yet I nevertheless love my country, am proud of its history, and glory in what I believe is to be her destiny.

To return for a moment, let us consider the warfare of 1776. Was it England fighting America in such a sense that we ought to lay up any slightest feeling of enmity from that far-away time? Did you ever think — if you have not, I beg to impress it upon you, so you will never forget it again — that the thing we fought for in 1776 was an outright gift to us on the part of England? Did the Puritans, the Pilgrims, the Cavaliers, and their descendants originate one single idea of liberty for which we fought against King George? No. Englishmen originated them,— every one. From the days of King John, the barons, and Magna Charta, down to the magnificent history of the men who stood for manhood rights against kingly prerogative, Cromwell, Milton, every one of them, fought and wrought out at the cost of their lives the liberty for which we fought in Boston, for which Washington gave his noblest and highest devotion. It was not a warfare between the colonists and England: Pitt and his compeers represented the heart of England. We fought kingly prerogative such as Cromwell fought. It was the last pretence of the divine right of kings in Lord North and George III. It was these things that were fighting liberty, not only in the colonies, but at home; and every particle of liberty which we started with as a young nation, and which we have developed and enriched and enlarged, is the gift of magnificent England. Never forget that. But for England

we should not have had these ideas of liberty that have been the glory of our own land.

I want to ask your attention now to another thing in favor of England. What has been the policy of England since the days of 1776 in regard to her colonies? When Rome conquered a province, what did she do with it? Give it any liberty, any rights, any opportunity to develop commerce? The Cæsar was almost sure to pick out some pampered favorite of his own, and make him governor of that province, giving him a chance to enrich himself by squeezing the life out of the people. That is the way provinces were treated in the ancient world.

What has Spain done with her provinces? Has she taught them to be free? Has she cultivated their industries and their commerce? She has used and exploited them for her own advantage; and that is the reason every one of them all over the world, as fast as it has been able, has broken away from all connection with the mother land.

What has England done? England to-day has no single advantage over any other country on the face of the earth in any one of her colonies except that which is based on kinship and mutual consideration and the skill of England in the matters of trade. The ports of these colonies are as free to us, as free to France, as free to Russia, as free to Turkey, as they are to the mother country itself.

What is the policy of England in India to-day? The old rajahs, the petty kings, robbed the people, ground them down to the very last limit of the possibility of life. Why? To build palaces and monuments and expensive harems which they decorated and kept for their own pleasure. What has England done in India? She has not taken a dollar from India for her own behoof. The taxes of India are used in India and for the benefit of India; and it has been unspeakably blessed and benefited in every conceivable way by English occupation.

I do not care what led England there in the first place. I

have neither time nor inclination to raise the question, or try to answer it, as to what has taken England to any part of the globe; but I challenge contradiction to this statement. There is not a spot on earth to-day where England's foot is placed that would not be unspeakably worse to-morrow if that foot were lifted and taken away. Not one step has England taken around the world that has not meant the uplift of humanity, finer and higher religion, education, industrial advance, opportunity for liberty, just as fast as the people were fit for it,—unspeakable blessing to all the people involved.

Where, then, should our sympathies be? At the very outset, whatever the problem that comes up, should they not be with England?

Let us now for a moment glance at the condition of things in South Africa. We are sometimes told that England is simply grabbing for new possessions there, for mines and money and power, as she has done in other parts of the world.

Let us first raise another question. What are the rights of an individual or a people concerning land which they happen to take possession of? If a man is cast away on a desolate island and takes first possession of the whole thing, and another man is cast away on the same island, has the first man a right to put the other one back in the sea to perish, or must he share with him the opportunity at least for life? If a man should go into an unoccupied country and take up a hundred thousand acres of land and on those acres were the only springs and streams in the whole region, and other people should come along, would he have a perfect right to do as he liked with the springs and streams and let the other people perish? Would men bear it for a moment,—that theory of rights?

If a people be in possession of a certain country, are their rights there unlimited? Never. The concession would be monstrous; and it has never been admitted since the beginning of human sanity.

I do not claim to know the ins and outs of the problems in South Africa, but I understand the situation to be something like this: The Boers had possession of this country, supposed to be simply an agricultural country; and they were leading the lives of farming people. It was discovered to be immensely rich in mines and wealth of every kind; and, naturally, people from all over the world flocked in there. Have the Boers a right to keep everybody else out,— a right, if it be one, that no nation on the face of the earth ever conceded even if claimed? We made no such claim in regard to California or to any of our possessions. What is the result? Englishmen went in every day, until there were more outlanders than there were Boers. And the Boer government promised them certain rights and privileges which they did not concede. They made promises which they never kept. One of their rules was that an Englishman must be a resident fifteen years before he could vote. He might be taxed and harried and hampered the first year he is there. He must get out a paper, or a pass,— I think it is every six months, or very frequently,— before he can travel from one part of the country to another. In other words, he is hampered, harried, and taxed at every turn, and has no voice whatever in the government that claims thus to dominate and rule and direct every movement.

Would we bear it? I trow not. Out of this condition of things has come the irritation that has burst forth into war. And naturally it seems to me, I believe inevitably; and I believe that at every point the English have been right. That is, every point of importance. I do not say there have not been individual wrongs, grievances, irritations. But the contention of England — the main contention — I believe to be a righteous contention. And when England wins, as she will, it will mean not oppression to the Boers, not even the kind of oppression they have exercised over the English. It will mean liberty, education, enlightenment. It will

mean every good thing for the people concerned, whether they be British or Boers.

This is my view, the most intelligent one I have been able to gain of the English situation in South Africa.

Now let me pass on, and consider for a moment some of our own affairs; and then I shall bring you back to England again at the end.

There is a large body of people among us who have raised the question as to whether the attitude we have taken in the Philippines be right. I believe it to be unimpeachably right. As I said at the outset, I am not dogmatizing. I am simply stating as emphatically as I can my own feelings. It has been said that America, being fortunately situated between the oceans, ought to keep herself from being entangled in the difficulties, the problems, of every other people; that she ought to sit back lazily, comfortably, and grow rich and fat. Is that the highest idea which you hold of a nation's prerogative and duty?

I have never been able to understand why a nation has any right to be supremely selfish and comfortable and let the world go its own way, any more than a private individual has. I think that man who, because he is comfortably situated, sits back at his own ease and eats and drinks and is merry and comfortable, even if it is over books or music, and does nothing for the world that needs him, is the meanest man on the face of the earth. And I think that nation which is willing, merely because it is fortunately situated, to grow rich and fat and comfortable, and leave the other nations to settle the world's great problems of right and wrong, the questions of civilization, is the meanest on the face of all the earth. I should be ashamed of America if we were willing to take any such attitude as that.

But it is said we have no right to undertake the government of any other part of the world without the "consent of the governed." That beautiful saying of the Declaration of Independence, which nobody on the face of the earth has

ever paid any practical attention to, is being flung in our faces in every direction. The grand old senator from Massachusetts occupies, it seems to me, the most deliciously illogical position that any man ever got into. He was ready to help us annex Hawaii; and he never suggested that we should get the consent of the Hawaiians. He asked for no consent except of the American residents there, who were a very small minority. Yet he tells us we are violating the fundamental principle of our government when we propose to take in another group of islands a little further west,— what he was ready to do in Hawaii. Did we ask the "consent of the governed" in the purchase of Florida or Louisiana? Did we ask it of the South in the Civil War? Do we ask it of the various Indian tribes?

What is the situation in the Philippines? We did not go there to capture the Philippines. Dewey was sent there to strike a blow at Spain; but the result of that blow was, willy nilly, to throw the Philippines upon our hands. We destroyed the only government there was,— bad enough it was, too,— we destroyed that. Were we not under the highest moral obligation to give them at least as good a government as that which we destroyed?

I have asked in vain in every direction the persons I have discussed this matter with what they would do with the Philippines. The group of wise men in Boston who talk about the blood-stained McKinley and the horrible aggressions of the American government have, so far as I know, never suggested any way of undoing the Gordian knot. What would they have us do with the Philippines? Give them back to Spain? I should think we were hardly ready for that. Leave them to themselves? What would that mean? That they would surely be taken possession of by some other government. It would not mean that they would be left to themselves, free. But suppose we did leave them to themselves, free. What then? Only another Hayti. Only another country where there would be a

revolution once a month, constant rapine, burning, and slaughter.

Who is there in the Philippines to govern them, with a right to? Aguinaldo represents one tribe,—*perhaps*—I have never heard it proved that he represents even one tribe yet. I have heard of no popular vote on the subject. No one knows whether he represents a majority or whether it is simply a fraction of his own tribe. But, while his tribe represents something over a million people, there is one other tribe representing over two million people. And there is no end of other tribes and languages. Is there any good reason why Aguinaldo should claim to represent the Philippines? Can he do so with the consent of the governed?

Who has a right to speak for the Philippines? Nobody on the face of the earth yet, except the American people, into whose hands they fell as the legitimate fruit of war. And the American people, it seems to me, are under the most strenuous of all obligations, first to establish peace, order, throughout the islands, at any cost of time or money or effort. Then will come up the question as to what next. And I believe that the genius of our government is such that it will mean local representation, local autonomy, liberty, education, development, industrial, social, political, for the Philippines, just as fast as they show themselves capable of these things.

In other words, America will try to do in the Philippines what she is trying to do in Cuba, what she tries to do in Porto Rico, what she tries to do in Hawaii, what she does in New York and Massachusetts, just as fast as and as far as the people are capable of comprehending and coworking with her effort.

I said I was going to bring you back to England. I ask you to raise your minds for a few moments to what I believe to be the highest moral level that we can conceive as touching the world situation to-day. As I hear people discuss these matters, it seems to me that they have not read or

thought, or, if they have thought or read, they have done these things to little purpose.

Napoleon said that fifty years would find Europe all republican or all Kossack. His prophecy has not been literally fulfilled. Napoleon tried to check the Kossack power, but the Moscow fire baffled him and turned him back in defeat. To-day what is the world situation?

Russia is perhaps in certain ways the mightiest military power on the globe. Take your maps when you go home to-day or to-morrow or at your first moment of leisure, and see how much of the northern half of Europe belongs to Russia. Then turn to Asia and see how her possessions stretch clear across the continent to the Pacific Ocean; and then remember that there are thousands on thousands of Slavs in other parts of Europe, and that the one great purpose of the czar is to have a great Pan-Slavic Empire by and by.

Do you stop to think that there is no other ruler on the face of the earth who exercises a tithe of the power of the czar, who is not only the Cæsar, but who is the pope, the head not only of the Church, but of the country as well? Millions of the peasants in the empire practically worship the White Czar as the most faithful Romanist worships the thought and ideas of Leo XIII. in Rome.

Warily, the czar is reaching out in this direction and that. We sometimes think of his kingdom as away to the north, a frozen place, hardly worthy of the residence of any one who could have his choice; and yet those who have been there know that St. Petersburg is one of the most brilliant capitals on the globe. Those who have studied the maps know that there are no finer rivers on earth as those that run through the Russian possessions. She is building to-day a railway across Siberia. Siberia represents to us only snow plains and icebergs; and yet its southern line is away south of Berlin, and it is one of the most magnificent agricultural, grain-producing countries on the earth. There is nothing in

the way of natural resources that is not at the command of the czar. He is to-day feeling his way in China; and do you know what that means? We look upon the Chinese washerman as he comes to this country as a puny fellow of no concern; but those who have lived in China know that the Chinese are the English of the East. The Japanese are only the French, of no concern or importance as compared with the Chinese. When China once is awake, when China once knows her power — what then?

We say that Japan whipped China in the late war. Shallow is the thought. The great majority of the Chinese to-day do not even know that there has been a war. When China wakes up, do you know that there are four hundred millions of people to be organized into a great empire? And the Chinaman is the greatest business man in all the East. And the czar is feeling his way along the borders of China, encroaching step by step, and doing everything he can to take possession of this vast inchoate future empire.

Suppose he succeeds? The destiny of the world would be in the hands of one autocrat, a man representing every principle of government and religion which every free man detests and fears. And that is the great, possible, I believe imminent, danger of the future. When you read in your morning newspaper about a conflict on the part of Russia to exercise some new influence in China or gain some new port or a concession by which she can build a railway in some part of the country, remember what scheme may underlie it all.

And what is there to checkmate him? What is there by way of promise of a possible hope of another destiny for the world. I believe, friends, that a disaster to England would be the greatest world calamity that could be conceived, next to the destruction of our own republic. England is fighting as against Russia in China for what? For English advantages? No. For the advantage of civilization. She is fighting for open ports, for liberty. She is fighting to keep

the czar from absorbing China and for the sake of the world. She is not taking a single advantage in any Chinese port that is not open to us after her on the same terms, while she perhaps has paid the bills in blood and pounds for the achievement.

I believe that, if worst came to worst, and there was a war between Russia and England in the East for the two world ideals which they represent,— I believe America would owe it as the highest duty to God and man to place every ship, every gun, every dollar she possessed, at the back of and beside England [applause], not for the advantage of America, not for the advantage of England, but for God and for man and duty. I will say nothing as to our debt to England for her silent but no less potent friendship a year ago. I speak of higher interests and of world-wide obligations.

God forefend, God grant that there may be no meddling on the part of France or Russia until England settles the problem which she has on her hands to-day! But did I wield the power of this nation, and such meddling came, I would say, Hands off! to any power on the globe.

I would not interfere between England and the Boers. Let them fight it out. England is competent; but I would see to it that England had a free hand and no interference; because England and America, hand in hand, represent the future hope of the world's civilization. If they can only understand each other and co-operate together, they can control the destiny of the world,— control it in the interests of education, of religion, of science, of art, of industry, of liberty,— of all that we hope for as best as we look towards the future.

This, then, is my view of the great ethical problem that we are working out, in the midst of which we are, and which will call for all the wisdom, all the enthusiasm, all the patience, all the nobility, which we possess.

Let us remember, then, that for world purposes there is no

such thing as England *and* America. England and America are one at heart, one in religion, one in interest, one in ideals, one in hopes; and we must be one in either defeat or triumph.

Father, let the great duty that fronts us be clear; and let us give our hearts and our minds to its fulfilment, faithful in little things as in great, casting our influence in favor of God and humanity and the hopes of the day to be. Amen.

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EDWARD A. HORTON.

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The Blessed Christmas

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THE BLESSED CHRISTMAS.

As a text, I take the words recorded in the second chapter of the Gospel according to Luke, the tenth verse,— "And the angel said unto them, Fear not; for behold I bring you glad tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people."

My boyhood was spent in the central part of the State of Maine. At that time — perhaps many of you have had similar experiences — I hardly ever heard of such a thing as Christmas. At any rate, not until after I was grown and had moved away from the State did I ever receive a Christmas present. I did not know of Christmas presents being given to anybody. If presents were exchanged at all, it was generally on New Year's Day. I never heard of a Christmas celebration in Sunday-school. I do not remember hearing a special Christmas sermon preached. Christmas played practically no part in the life of the Puritans and Pilgrims of New England for a great many years. The only celebration that I can recall was the desire on the part of the children to be the first one on Christmas morning to say, "I wish you a Merry Christmas." That was the beginning of it and the end.

Why is it that Puritanism found itself unable to live with Christmas? There are two reasons. It came in what it regarded as its work of sweeping reform to do away with Christmas, because it had come to regard it as a relic of Popery, a Papish superstition. And there was a better reason than that. For a long time among the common people in England the Christmas, or Yule-tide celebration, was an occasion for revelry, for dissipation, for possible im-

moralities of every kind. And then the stern Puritanism of the age looked with a certain kind of suspicion upon the indulgence in any sort of human happiness, because it seemed to it unfitting for the fierce, earnest life that was needed to fight the battle of God against so many foes as it recognized on every hand. Puritanism banished a thousand things which have since come back to us, because they were rooted in the human heart. They were rooted in the very fibre of human life, a part of our inheritance, so much so that they can never be outgrown or taken away.

I suppose it is true that Charles Dickens did more than anybody else to make Christmas a joyous, social, happy festival in England and America during his time. He helped to bring it into vogue once more; and we owe it to him that it has such a warm welcome with so many people who, but for his writings and service, would have been a much longer time in getting ready to recognize its joyous features once more.

Saint Augustine tells us that Christmas was not one of the original apostolic festivals. He recognized only four,—Good Friday, Easter, Ascension Day, and Whitsuntide. He tells us that Christmas was of later origin; and he who takes a little trouble to study the fact will find that it was not until the fourth century that there was any general agreement, on the part of the Church, as to a day on which they could celebrate the birth of the Nazarene. The Oriental Church wanted one day, the Western or Roman Church wanted another. Some thought it ought to be in May, some in April, some in January; and so the discussion went on long after the custom had grown up of celebrating it on some day. But the Pope of Rome carried his purpose at last, and united the Church in all its divisions on the twenty-fifth day of December as the day on which they should celebrate the birth of Christ.

And why was that day celebrated? Of course, the simple fact that the Church was in disagreement about it so long

lets us into the secret that nobody knows when Jesus was born. We are not certain even of the year. He was probably born in the year 4 B.C.,— that is, before we began to reckon our time from A.D.; but no one has the slightest idea as to what month or what day of the month.

How, then, did it happen that the Church fixed at last upon the twenty-fifth day of December? Letting you into this secret, friends, will not, I trust, take away anything of the sweetness of our Christian Christmas, but will only deepen and widen the stream of our joy, because it tells us that Christmas is older than the name, and that it is wider than our Christian communion; that it is human, that it has its roots in the heart of man, in the nature of things. Our name is only the Christ-mass,— the mass celebrated on this day. These evergreens came from the old Germanic people, our mistletoe from the Druids. The pattern of our oldest Christmas carol is Druidical in its origin. So there is hardly a feature of the day that originated with our Christian Christmas festival. Gift-giving, or the exchanging of presents on that day, we can trace back to ancient Rome. How much farther I do not know.

But this, to my mind, does not take away from the sweetness, the sacredness, the beauty, the glory, the blessedness of the day, but only intensifies all these, because it is something that we do not share exclusively in our Christian homes, but something that widens out and takes in every child of humanity from the far-off dawn of history not only, but of tradition itself.

And what did it mean? It meant originally the birth of the Sun-God. You see from this that it sprung out of the life and experiences of the northern nations. Had our religious traditions originated in the southern hemisphere, they would have taken another shape and color. Picture a moment, imaginatively, the Northern nations and their conditions. We talk to-day of our great inventions, our wonderful discoveries; but the one greatest invention of all the

world, if we are to deal with its significance and importance as bearing on human development and civilization, was the invention of fire, the discovery of a method by which to kindle fire and keep and control it. Our far-away ancestors lived for ages before they made this great discovery. The first fires, created by accident perhaps, by a stroke of lightning or in some such way, were regarded as miraculous; and fire was worshipped and is still worshipped by some of the nations to-day as a god. By it we have been able to conquer great differences of climate, and make our homes in every part of the world. It is very difficult for us to understand what the lack of it meant to the ancient people. I can remember — and I am not so very old — the tinder box and the flint, the very first matches that were ever invented; and I can remember our farmer neighbors coming to our house to borrow a fagot from the fire as the easiest way to kindle their own flame at home.

What must it have been in those far-off times before there was any knowledge or mastery of the fire? Then, as they saw the sun gradually receding towards the south, the days growing shorter and the nights longer, and the cold more intense, it seemed to them as though their God had forgotten them, was going away from them or was losing his power, was in danger of death from his age-long enemies, darkness and cold.

But by and by comes the shortest day of all, the solstice, the standing still of the sun; and then the rebirth of the God, and the glad shout goes up that he is coming back,— he who means what? Light, warmth, life, joy,— everything that they could think of as summing up the blessedness of their existence. And so all over the ancient nations of the world this day, or a day about this time, was celebrated as the birth of the Sun-God; and shouts of delight and gladness, mutual congratulations, the exchange of gifts, were the natural outburst of the feeling of the human heart.

And so, you see, away off and down, farther than history,

farther than any clear tradition, lost in the mist of the antique world, was born this festival day,— born out of universal conditions, born out of the needs of human life; and this is the reason that, stamp it out as you may, discard it as you will, it comes to life again, because it is a part of the nature of things.

This day was celebrated among others with peculiar joyousness in ancient Rome. And so, when the popes found that they could not abolish the festivities, they compromised with conditions, very wisely, as so often they have done, and accepted the festival, only baptizing it and making it Christian. And so we celebrate the birth of the gentle Jesus, the Son of God, our elder brother, the ideal of our humanity, the one in whose face we see the glory of God on the day that used to be celebrated as the birthday of the Sun-God; and the 25th of December is our blessed Christmas.

I have already intimated to you what it meant to early man. It meant light, warmth, life, hope. Beneath the snows they saw the birth-time of the grasses and the blooming of the flowers again, the coming of spring and the far-away harvests.

> "Had one ne'er seen the miracle
> Of May-time from December born,
> Who would have dared the tale to tell
> That 'neath ice ridges slept the corn?"

Had it not been so long a fact of human experience, who would have dared to hope that out of the intensest cold of the winter could come the budding of the tender leaves in May, the unfolding of the beautiful tints of the spring and early summer?

This is what Christmas meant to the early peoples. And now, when we have baptized it and made it Christian, and said that on this day we will celebrate the birth of the man, —the date of whose birth we do not know,— it has taken on only a spiritualized significance akin to and springing out

of the old. It means to us, then, does it not, light,— light on our way? Jesus says, "I am the way: he that will follow me shall find the Father." And we believe it; for no one can follow the footsteps of Jesus without coming into the conscious presence of the Father, in whom he believed and in whom we believe the more because of his great faith. It means to us spiritual light. And, then, it means warmth, spiritual warmth, which is what? Love, that love which the New Testament tells us is God, that love which, in spite of all appearances of contradiction, is the deepest thing at the heart of the world. And Jesus believed this, taught that the love of the Father was the most natural, sweetest thing in all the world. And we believe it the more easily because he lived it,— lived it in the midst of defiance and persecution, lived it in the face of his enemies, lived it among the poor and the lowly, lived it among the hateful and the hating, lived it in the presence of his enemies, lived it during the trial days, lived it on the cross, lived it through death and into the immortal life. And we, since he, our brother, lived this life, see that it is the divinest thing on the face of the earth,— this love that conquers all things antagonistic to itself and reshapes them into things of divine beauty and glory and peace.

And it means not only light and love: it means life,—that life which defies death, that life which we cannot associate with the body as a thing necessarily belonging to it, the deeper life, the life that means kinship with God, fellowship with God, that life that was voiced in the thought that put into the mouth of Jesus the words, "Because I live, ye shall live also." So life is another significance of this blessed Christmas.

And then hope,— light, love, life, hope,— hope interminable, hope that storms cannot quench, hope that blasts of adversity cannot put out, hope that burns with a clear, pure flame, that brightens the storm and the darkness, that casts its gleam through and over the shadow, and seems to be kindled from another world.

This is what Christmas means to us. You see it is the same old theme that the Child-man of the world gained his glimpse of and expressed as well as he was able; but only the gentle, beautiful soul of the Nazarene has lifted up the old, natural beginnings and transformed them, infused them with divine significance, and made them beautiful and glorious. This is what makes our Christmas blessed.

There is another phase that is blessed; and that is,—and I take it this must have been true in those early days as well: so far as we can discover, it was,—it is the children's day, the day on which we love to see the children happy. Sometimes I think that it does not make so very much difference whether we older folk are happy or not, if we can only make all the children of the world happy. As Longfellow sings,—

> "Ah! what would the world be to us
> If the children were no more?
> We should dread the desert behind us
> Worse than the dark before."

And in the last stanza of the same gentle, sweet, lovable poem he says:—

> "Ye are better than all the ballads
> That ever were sung or said;
> For ye are living poems,
> And all the rest are dead."

As I look back, I sometimes have a little pathetic pity for my own childhood because I did not have any Christmas; but it only makes me all the more anxious to see every child happy, at least on this day. I love to think of the fathers, the mothers, the friends, surprising them into every kind of delight, until their little lives run over with glee and gladness that makes it easier for them in after years to believe in some other love because they have had the love of mother and of father.

There are things better than books and pictures and playthings that you can give your children; and there is room in

here for a whole sermon, had I time for it. I wish only to suggest one or two things. I have spoken of how blessed a thing it is for children to have happiness on Christmas Day, how blessed a thing it is for a child to have a childhood,— a happy, sunny childhood. I have no sort of respect for the man, whoever he was, who invented the saying, "Spare the rod and spoil the child." I think it is infamous in its suggestion instead of divine, no matter who uttered it. I believe that, since we have brought the children here,— they did not ask to come,— the obligation is all towards them. I hear fathers and mothers sometimes saying the children never know how much they owe to their parents. I detest the whole conception. Parents never know how much they owe the children. The debt is all that way; and the best thing you can give the children is a sunny, happy childhood. I do not believe that many healthy, well-born children go astray, if their home has been one that they can look back upon with delight. If they carry in their hearts the beautiful memory of father and mother! Sweet as pictures of the Madonna and the Jesus do these memories grow, if father and mother have been worthy. If children can carry out into the world memories like these, there is no gift of money or station or fame that you can bestow upon them that is one-half so priceless.

Make the childhood of the children, then, a blessed one,— not only on Christmas Day, but all the year around,— and you have bestowed upon them the most precious gift that is in your power; and you have done more than anything or anybody else can do to insure that their lives shall be noble and honorable, a credit to you and of service to their fellow-men.

There is another feature of this blessed Christmas that I wish to revert to for a moment; and that is the humanity of it. We forget for a little while the distinctions of class and position; and we pour out our sympathy and our money to make everybody glad for at least one eve and one day. I

wonder how many people are aware that they are here imitating unconsciously the antique world. It is very curious, and intensely interesting to me, to see how these things persist, how they become apparently wrought into the very fibre of brain and heart and soul. As they go on up the ages, not only are they undiminished, but increasing in power. The Saturnalian Festival was not originally a time of dissipation. It took its name from the old god, Saturn. All people have a Golden Age. Some put it in the past, some in the future. The people who looked back to the time of Saturn put it in the past. They believed there was a period when he lived and reigned in person in ancient Italy, and that at that time there were no class distinctions. Nobody was rich, and nobody was poor. There were no diseases, no wars, no hatreds. All lived a life of simple and happy equality; and it was a part of the Saturnalian Festival in Rome — and this is the one I have been talking about, which was rebaptized and turned into Christmas — to revert to the supposed conditions of the antique world. There was a great feast prepared; and the servants were dressed as though they were masters and sat down to the feast, while the masters dressed as servants and waited on them. So that for a little while distinctions were abolished; and it ministered to the welfare and happiness of all the race.

This was the old-time Saturnalia; and do you not see how the spirit of it persists, and how we approximate to it to-day? We hunt out the poor, our neighbors, those less favored than we in condition, the children and the grown people equally, without regard to religion or nationality; and we try to make them happy, try to make them forget that there is anything in this world but one Father in heaven, and that all we are brethren.

And is it not a beautiful thing to do? I love to see people plan to surprise other people into joy, people finding their gladness in the happiness of other people. Did it ever occur to you — I wish you would ponder it carefully —

that if, as you go through this world, you stake your chance of happiness on your simple self, on your having all you want and doing all you desire, that you are but one of millions, and you have just one chance in millions of succeeding? But suppose you train yourself to find your happiness reflected from the faces of thousands and millions of other people, that you make it your ambition to make other people happy, find your joy in other people's joy. Do you not see that then you have a million chances to one in favor of success? I wonder this does not occur to people oftener.

And there is another thing that surprises me. We call Christmas the merriest, gladdest day of all the year; and it means we forget to be selfish for a little while, and try to make somebody else happy and comfortable. I wonder why it should not occur to people that that which makes them so happy one day of the year might not make them equally happy two days of the year, or three, or a whole week, or a month. I wonder what the condition of the world would be if we tried this for a whole year. That is, if we tried to be a little less selfish, care a little more for the welfare and happiness of all people, exercise the blessedness of the Christmas spirit, not only on the 25th of December, but on January 1, and clear on down to summer, autumn, and winter again. Here, at any rate, is the blessedness of the Christmas spirit; and our one hope of the future is that some day it shall be universal. Why not begin now to try to expand and spread it? When we pray for the coming of God's kingdom, it is this we are praying for. This is the blessedness of Christmas.

One last suggestion. Last Sunday I preached on War; and yet we talk about Jesus as the Prince of Peace, and we celebrate his birth, and it means we look forward to the coming of the time when hatred shall have died out and love taken its place, when goodness and gladness shall predominate throughout all the world. And Christmas does mean this. Is it not true that, in spite of wars, hatreds,

the evil that is in the human heart, there is in us an inexterminable hope of something better? We believe always that beyond this war shall be peace.

A friend was telling me the other day that her father expected to live to a time when there would be no more war. He thought that the Civil War would have been the last one in the world. And she said she certainly hoped that she should live to the time when war should cease. But our ideal eludes us. It looks, this universal peace, just over there; but when we get there, it is a mirage, like an oasis in a desert, and we find sand and the pleasant grass and beautiful trees but a reflection in the sky.

There is a tale of the Crusades, that at a certain time an army of children gathered together, thinking they, too, would go to the Holy Land to help recover the sepulchre of the Lord; and they started on their mad march. And, weary, dusty, and foot-sore, they would see the spires of a little town in the distance, and would cry out to their leader, "Is this Jerusalem?" thinking it must be very near, having no conception that it was hundreds and hundreds of miles beyond all their power of endurance.

And so this hopeful, human race of ours goes on, in the midst of war and desolation and evil; and every little while we catch a glimpse of the spires of some distant town, and we cry out, "Is this Jerusalem, the real City of God?" And, when we get there and tread its streets, we find it a little common, muddy town; and our ranks are thinned. More have died, more are sick, more are hopeless at heart than there were when we left the last town behind. And so the weary progress goes on.

But, friends, the world always has believed: it believes now, and it always will believe. No matter how many times we are disappointed, there is a divine Jerusalem that we shall find some day; and this is what I said of that inextinguishable hope at the heart of man. This is at the heart of our Christmas festival.

We believe in light, in love, in life, in hope,— in God who sums them all up; in God, who made them radiant in the face of Jesus the Christ; in God, who has put them into our hearts to refresh us upon our weary march, until by and by there comes, as there shall come, attainment, and the glory and peace which that word carries with it as a perpetual promise.

And now, Father, we thank Thee once more for this blessed Christmas. As the day comes round, we take new courage, we are nearer the realization of all that the world has sought. When we look at the progress of one year, it seems little. When we see what humanity has attained from the beginning, it means so much that we dare not lose heart or hope, but believe in the possibility of all great and grand things; and so we give Thee thanks, adding our little mite of service, trusting Thou wilt accept it and make it part of that song of triumph which all of us some time shall sing Amen.

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The Holiness of Helpfulness

BY

Rev. ROBERT COLLYER

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THE HOLINESS OF HELPFULNESS.

"Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord."—Rom. xii. 11.

George Stephenson was getting ready to go to a Methodist meeting. He was a young man, just at that period in life when young men go to Methodist meeting more and more until they are brought directly under the influence of the master-spirit of the place, and become in a sense religious men. There is not much doubt in my mind, as I read this young man's life up to this time, that he is in a fair way to that preferment. He has that thread of natural piety and goodness in his nature that is almost sure to draw him into a more intimate relation with the forms and industries of the recognized religious life about him, if nothing prevents. I said he was getting ready to go to the meeting, when a neighbor came to tell him he was wanted. He was then running an engine at a coal-pit. There was another pit between this and his home, which he passed every day, that had been flooded with water, so that the men were beaten out. The company got a steam-pump to clear the pit, and kept it at work for twelve months, with no success at all. The water, when they had been pumping twelve months, was as deep as when they first began to pump; and the wives and children were starving for bread.

This young Stephenson had a most active energy and fervent spirit toward whatever went by steam. The great ambition of his boyhood was to run an engine; and, when he rose to that position, as he did very soon, he treated his engine as if he loved her. Whenever there was a holiday and

the works were stopped, instead of going out with the rest, he studied her until she became as familiar to him as his own right hand.

He was not slothful in business, and he was fervent in spirit.

Intimate with the charge that was laid upon him, he soon began to perceive why those women and children were starving. The difference between what the pump was and what it ought to be was the difference between a tall, slender, narrow-chested man and a short, sturdy, broad-chested man, engaged in digging earth or scooping out water. Every pump-owner in the country-side had tried to mend this pump and failed, because, I suppose, pump-mending and engine-running with them was a business, and not a passion. This young man with the fervent spirit said one day, as he went past the pit, "I can clear that pit in a week"; and they laughed him to scorn. But they could not laugh the water to scorn, and so at last they sent for him to come and try his hand. He went there instead of going to the church. He went into the pit on a Sunday morning, and worked all that day, and until the next Sunday, cleared out all the water in a week, and sent the men down to earn their children bread.

From that time the young man comes into notice. He works through all sorts of opposition, and never rests until he has got an engine to run fifty miles an hour. He is, more than any other man, entitled to be called the father of the railroad system. He kept the diligent hand and fervent heart right on to the end of his life. He was a good husband, a good father, a good friend, and a good citizen. But it is a curious fact that, from the time when he was prevented from going to meeting on that Saturday night, he never seems to have gone, or to have thought of going again, to the end of his life. He did not turn religious, as we say, even when he had nothing else to do, but lived a kindly, sunny, or shadowy, faithful life, right on to the end,

and then died quietly, and made no sign. He never said he feared he had done wrong in turning from that church to that coal-pit, and trying to mend the pump on Sunday instead of keeping the Sabbath day holy by doing nothing. Indeed, it never seems to have occcurred to him to think the matter over in any way whatever. His heart was too full and his hand too busy about engines to find room for the idea, or to find time, as we should say, to save his soul. And so it brings up a question that to me has a good deal of interest; namely, While this man was so busy and so fervent in the way I have noted, did he also serve the Lord? or, from the moment he turned aside from the meeting, and began to lose that sense and liking for meetings and their peculiar services, did he cease to serve the Lord altogether, and, remaining only diligent in business and fervent in spirit, go out of this world into darkness and despair?

Now I am well aware what the common answer to such a question would be. It would be, "We must leave him in the hands of God: we cannot answer the question, because we have no data." But that is not true. If he had been an idle good-for-nothing, a scampish sharper, an abandoned libertine, an unprincipled truckler, or a political vulture; if he had beaten his wife, trained up his child in the way he should go to State's prison; if he had been a common nuisance for sixty-nine years and a half, never going into a church except to make a disturbance, never keeping the Sabbath except in sensual sleep, and six months before his death, or six weeks or six days, had repented of his sin, had led a good and pure life, adopted religious ideas like those commonly held, and said clearly that he believed God had pardoned his sins and would take him to heaven,— we should feel the utmost confidence of that man's safety from that date. But we do not feel sure for this other man. It is a great mystery, and we must leave him in the hands of God. But, if you push us to the fair conclusion of our own stand-

ards of religious belief and the books we adopt, we feel compelled to say that he has gone to hell.

Now this looks to me like a tremendous piece of injustice on the very face of it. I think, if a man could be brought face to face with the question as I have stated it, and as it really stands in the common theological systems; could see these men brought up before what are called our evangelical churches, having never heard of these peculiar religious ideas up to that time; could see the men examined, and then observe which man was sent upward and which downward by these standards,— his conclusion would be that there was something radically wrong in their premises. And I can well imagine how such a man would argue for a new trial. He would say: "I know nothing at all about your authorities for this decision. You tell me that they bear the mint mark of divinity; that they have come to you from the remotest antiquity, from prophets and apostles and the Son of God himself; that they are the fruit of a divine inspiration, foreshadowed in prophecies, confirmed by miracles, and held by martyrs at the stake."

Now all this may be true; but I know something of the laws of this universe, of what enters into the real life of man for blessing and for hurt. I cannot, and I will not, deny the claim of this man, who has kept the divine law six months out of threescore and ten years, to be saved. It is always right to do right, and a man is bound upward from the moment when he does begin to do well. Whenever that may be, he begins to come out of his rags and wretchedness into a wholesome purity and happiness. But where you have one reason on your authorities for saying that this man is good and ascended, because he has done what you say for six months out of the threescore and ten years of his life, I have sixscore and twenty good reasons for the assurance that this other man is also ascended, because he has done good according to the organic laws of the world ever since he came into it. And you may be sure I have

not brought up this question only to prove that the man I have mentioned for illustration was saved, though the common interpreters of the Christian doctrine claim that by their standards it is impossible he should be saved, but to make the man, as he represents an idea of very great importance in our life, the basis of some discussion of a segment, at least, of true religion.

And I say a segment, because religion in all its reaches is as boundless as the spirit of God and the infinitely varied life of man can make it; and there can be no exhaustive system of religion, in the hard, dry sense of the term. Every system is a statement, a proposition, a shadow of the principles that impress most deeply the man who makes it. The Calvinist has not the same idea of free grace as the Arminian, nor the Arminian the same idea of predestination as the Calvinist. The Episcopalian and Quaker and Presbyterian have no common union except that which comes from standing at the angles of a triangle.

The men who sprinkle, the men who immerse, and the men who do neither can all show exhaustive reason for their particular methods. And I think the reason for all this lies far less in the perverseness of the men than in their powerlessness to see all the glory and grandeur of the truth of God that is in the world.

Schools of theology are like schools of painting: they are in some measure the copy of a copy. They copy from their great Master, and he copied from God. Walking down the world of truth and beauty, the great painter sees things that make his soul aflame with their beauty and wonder. Mountains, meadows, woodlands, rivers, men and women, sun and shadow, fill him with a sense of their intimate and unutterable divinity. But he cannot paint all he sees. He can paint really very little, but he paints what he can. He follows the bent of his own genius and inspiration. He brings in here a meadow and there a wood, here a mountain and there a river, here a flower and there a figure, here a

bit of marvellous sunlight and there a wonderful touch of shadow, and makes them all glorious or sombre in the coloring of his own soul; and, when the picture is done, those that love it and follow it declare that it exhausts all perfection. But, beautiful as it may be, the man has got in but a very small piece of the infinite beauty that is all about him.

And so it is in religious truth: no one system exhausts even the Bible, how much less the boundless wealth of truth of which the Bible is but the part of a record. The system may be a good thing for the men who love that method, trying faithfully to copy the great original who founded the school. The copyist in the one case will hardly need write under his composition, "This is a mountain," and "This is a man," any more than in the other he will need to say, "I am religious after the school of Calvin or Luther." Still, the Rembrandt splendors of Calvin, the sober, gray realism of Fox, the water-color landscape of our Baptist brother, the broad Hogarths of Wesley, true to exaggeration, the sunny, Claude-like pictures of Channing, and the rich composition of the Episcopal, which in some lights seem to rise to the beauty and truth of the best Turners and in other lights to descend to the stage effects of Martin, and of which no one seems to be sure about the original or whether there be one,— all these are true in their way to what the Master saw, a transcript of things that filled his soul with keen delight or holy rapture or awful solemnity.

But beyond them and above them were other meadows, "beautiful as the gardens of the angels upon the slopes of Eden, forests that cover the mountains like the shadow of God, and rivers that move like his own eternity."

And so the claim that not one of the sects nor all the sects together have exhausted the truth brings the claim of this man into court to come in for a share, not of salvation only in the life to come, but of glory in the best, the most religious sense, in the life that now is, though he did take such a singular stand. When my friends said to me,

while yet a Methodist preacher: "How can you preach for Dr. Furness in Philadelphia, who is a Unitarian? We should suppose you could not find anything to say that these people would listen to, and yet be true to your Methodism?" I replied, "I find it easier to preach to them than to preach at home, for I leap over the fence that bounds the system of Methodism, and, as they are already over the fence that has bounded the *system* of Unitarianism, we all meet in the boundless world of truth which God has made outside; and it is wonderful how much we find to talk about when we get there." So I think the vital point in the question at issue turns on whether what a man thinks and feels or what he does is to be considered the essential element in his life; whether certain ideas, feelings, and industries in relation to what we agree to call religion are to be counted the great elements in the nobility of this life and the safety of the life to come or whether to do faithfully, with or without them, the one good thing which the passionate heart of the man indicates that he was created to do, is the true way to live.

And so, when we ask once more what this man can say in his defence or we can say for him, this, to my own mind, is the answer.

John Ruskin, in one of his chapters on "Modern Painters," enters into a discussion of the meanings of help. He says the clouds may come together, but they are no help to each other, and so the removal of one part is no injury to the rest; but, if you take the sap or bark or pith from a plant, you do that plant essential injury, for the part you take away has taken hold on that power we call life, by which all things in the plant help each other. Take a part from that power, so that it cannot help the rest, and it becomes what we call dead. Then he says, if you take a limb from an animal, it is a far greater injury than to take a limb from a tree, because intensity of life is intensity of helpfulness; and the more perfect, the more dreadful the loss; the more in-

tense the life, the more terrible the corruption; and most terrible of all in a man, because his life is the most helpful and most intense of all.

And so he ranges through this great thought until he finds that the name which of all others is most expressive of the being of God is that of the Helpful One, or, in our softer Saxon, the Holy One.

Now to me this expresses exactly the idea that underlies our life. The helpful life is the holy life. Holiness is help: sin is hindrance; and at whatever point we touch life to help it, or in whatever way we help the world and do not hinder it, whether by our prayers, songs, sermons, and industry in the church, or by the creation of a locomotive, the construction of a railroad, the painting of a picture, the writing of a book, the digging of a drain, the forging of a horseshoe, or the fighting of a battle,— in whatsoever thing we do, if we really do help and do not hinder, then that is a holy life. And in whatever way we hinder the world, and stand in the way of its life, its healthy, hearty growth, by doing what will hurt or hinder men in the largest sense, then that, being the reverse of helpful, is a sinful life. So the first principles of sin and holiness reach back into all creeds and churches, so far as they stand true to life, and no more; and the ultimate touchstone of holiness is the organic law by which the best interests of the whole man can be secured in his relation to the whole world and all the men that are in it.

And there is a beautiful illustration of this principle in two related incidents in the life of Christ. When he sat down, weary, at the well, the Samaritan woman came to fill her pitcher, and, entering into conversation with him, found that she had got hold of a preacher or prophet; and, thinking to get a solution of the old vexed question as to which was the true religion, Samaritan or Jew, she said, "Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say that in Jerusalem men ought to worship." He replied: "Ye wor-

ship ye know not what. We know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews." But when he heard the story, or saw in some inward way how a man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho and fell among thieves, who stripped him and wounded him and left him for dead, and how two Jews, a priest and a Levite,— men who stood first among the Jews in the relation of true church worship, if praying and singing be true worship; when he saw them go over to the other side, and leave the helpless man to his fate, and saw one of those Samaritans come along, who did not know what they worshipped; saw him leap from his horse, in a great flood of pity and mercy, hold up the poor fellow's head, stanch his wounds, set him on his own beast, and trudge along on foot himself, as if there was not a robber within a thousand miles, carry him to a tavern, and not throw him on the county when he got there, but pledge himself to pay all the expenses, and then walk away as if he had done one of the most common things in the world,— the great divine soul saw past the old dogma into this fresh organic law, this universal principle of worship, this holiness of helpfulness; and his soul clave to the soul of the Samaritan who knew not God.

And be sure this principle underlies every other principle whatever in the religious life. I can teach God really just so far as I am good. Christ will be divine greatly by my divinity. I am my own proof, before letters, of the intrinsic worth of human nature. I shall not have much trouble in proving to a man God is our Father if I can prove to him I am his brother. That volume of the evidences of Christianity which the other side never did answer, and never will, is a book written on what the apostle calls the fleshly tables of the heart. And this is the grand use of churches, systems, sacraments, and ceremonies. They reach back into the principle of helpfulness to find their seal. They are centres of help to the world and to the man, or they are nothing. I care not one pin for their age, evidences, liturgies, the-

ologies. If the church that holds them and holds you cannot help you, do not go to it. If it does help you, do not dare to stay away when you need help; and that, I take it, with most of us, is pretty much all the time. If your church does not help others, let it perish. If it does, care for it as you care for every noble and helpful thing,—nay, care for it as the noblest. If the liberal Christian preacher here or anywhere cannot help you in your most central and sacred life, and the Catholic bishop can, then I charge you, on your allegiance to God and your own soul, go to the bishop by the shortest route; but, if we do help you, if our words and deeds touch some spring that is to all the rest of your manhood or womanhood what the mainspring is to a watch, if we help you to a clearer vision and a deeper trust, to a fairer hope and a more abundant helpfulness, then we take hold on the first things, we stand to you in the old apostolic relation, we carry the keys. And every such man is the rock on which the Master will build his Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

Here, then, was the great use of the man I have noted for illustration. His place in the world was not in the church, but in the foundry. He was not the heart, but the hand in the body of Christ; but he *was* the hand, and his mission was to be strong, diligent, faithful, true to his trust, and let all the rest take care of itself. God raised him up to inaugurate railroads. Woe to him if he does not do that! He will endanger his soul if he neglects that. His place on that Sunday was in the coal-pit. Woe to him if the Master comes and finds him in the Methodist meeting! The great problem for him to solve is not whether he is going to be happy in meeting or happy on his death-bed or happy at all on this earth, but if he is going to be helpful in the one supreme way in which God has made him to be helpful. If he cannot be a true husband and father and man and machine-maker except he belongs to the church, then at his peril he fails to join one.

If the church and its religious ideas, emotions, and inspiration are needed to make him a good man, if he is not brave, faithful, strong, and loving, and the church can aid him to be all that, as I believe it can, then he must seek the church; but, if all that is in him, then God is in him, to will and to do of His good pleasure, and, when he carries that locomotive up to the throne, God will say, "Well done!"

And so I would rejoice in a church broad enough to take into full membership and full communion those men who know nothing of our belief, but whose heart and soul and mind and strength are devoted to some piece of helpfulness that shall lift this dark world into the sun, wherever that man may be working the work of Him that sent him. Let the angel of death come ever so suddenly, cast over them his white robe and whisper, "Peace!" that place in which he finds them is the very nearest point to heaven; and the first word that greets them is the glad "Well done!"

And I would have all such true and faithful men know this; would fain say to them: "This that you are doing is work for God. You may be a saint of God in the place where you stand." Dear friends, a mere feeling may fail you, but a helpful spirit never can, because that is a holy spirit. A ready hand and the fervent heart, if the one work and the other beat for good, is sure to be right. You mothers may be occupied with work for your children in the house until you have no time for what you call religion. You men may not know which way to turn in consequence of business in the office, and you may wonder whether so much to do in this world is safe for the next. You may long for the forms and feelings that are counted of such importance in many churches. Now do not misunderstand me: if they would help you to be more helpful, you cannot get too many. But if they stand instead of your helpfulness, so that in feeling happy you think you are religious, and are not helpful, they are dangerous; and they may come to be deadly.

You may die, as this man did, at the close of a long, faithful, helpful life, and give no sign; and yet no understanding soul will doubt that "for one so true there must be other, nobler work to do." Or you may die, with a testimony shining like burnished gold, at the end of a life in which you did not even drive away the dogs from the beggar at your gate; but you will wake up in the torment of an unsatisfied soul, and go into the hell of lost opportunities.

And if you say, "I am hedged about, I can do nothing: I fain would help, but I cannot," your very longing is help. "They also serve who only stand and wait." It is never true that we are not helpers. Where the fervent heart is, there is the servant of God; and unto him comes forever with the work the reward. He is still and strong in God, because he is a coworker with God; and his life holds for itself a secret which is not known to another. He has come in his very work to the rest that remaineth.

"Abou Ben Adhem (may his tribe increase!)
Awoke one night from a deep dream of peace,
And saw within the shadow of his room,
Making it rich, like a lily in bloom,
An angel, writing in a book of gold.
Exceeding peace had made Ben Adhem bold,
And to the presence in the room he said,
'What writest thou?' The vision raised its head,
And with a look made of all sweet accord,
Answered, 'The names of those who love the Lord!'
'And is mine one?' asked Abou. 'Nay, not so,'
Replied the angel. Abou spoke more low,
But cheerily still, and said, 'I pray thee, then,
Write me as one that loves his fellow-men.'
The angel wrote, and vanished. The next night
He came again with great awakening light,
And showed the names whom love of God had blessed;
And, lo! Ben Adhem's name led all the rest!"

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Entering on the Mystery of Another Year

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ENTERING ON THE MYSTERY OF ANOTHER YEAR.

I AM to preach a New Year sermon; and I take as my text one clause from the twenty-second verse of the twentieth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles,— "Not knowing the things that shall befall me there." Perhaps I had better read two whole verses, that you may see the setting of this phrase: "And now, behold, I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there: save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me."

These are the words of Paul. He is on his way to Jerusalem, and has come as far as the city of Ephesus. Here he makes a farewell address to the Christians of that great, famous, rich city. He anticipates what the outcome is to be. He knows that, when he reaches Jerusalem, he will be put on trial. He will come before the Roman governor. He appeals in this trial to Cæsar. He is sent to Rome; and there, as you know, comes the end,— a martyr's death.

The special thing that is appropriate for us to consider this morning, however, is this one phrase picked out of this typical situation,— "Not knowing the things that shall befall me there." But note that Paul did not lose heart. A great courage inspired him. Although he felt sure that only bonds and afflictions awaited him, and though he could not have been disappointed when the tragic end at last came to him, Paul had that great trust which made him believe that bonds and afflictions could not ultimately harm him,— that great trust, so rarely found in this modern time, which

made him dare to look even the last dread enemy, as we call him, in the face, without blanching, without trembling.

Our year, of course, is in a certain way an artificial thing. Every moment, in one sense, we are beginning a new year: every moment we are ending an old year. And yet for purposes of convenience we have divided our lives up into these periods of time. And these periods are not quite artificial, because they are based on astronomical facts. It takes a year for this wondrous old earth of ours to make its sweeping journey through space around the sun, giving us in its passage the changes of day and night, giving us spring and summer and autumn and winter, leading ever to spring again. We stand to-day at the threshold of this period of time. Another year lies before us; and, as it was true of the apostle concerning the journey which he had undertaken, so it is true of us,— we know not the things that shall befall us on this journey.

I have a few suggestions to make, commonplace enough in their way; and yet all the great and important things are commonplace. But I trust that my suggestions may be somewhat helpful to you: I trust they will also be helpful to me, and that together we may go on this uncertain journey with the certainty in our hearts of only one thing,— that, though bonds and afflictions may meet us, sorrow, trouble, trial, come, like Paul we can sing our trust, and at last enter into that greater mystery with the words of triumph on our lips.

Let me remark, in the first place, that I am very glad for my own part that I do not know the things that shall befall me during the coming year. All persons who have thought a little are glad that this is one question which is insolvable. Why? Take the superficial consideration. There is no beauty in a straight line. There is no beauty in a straight road. If we were compelled to drive across a prairie that looked as flat as a level sea clear to the distant horizon, and the road stretched as straight as rule could make it

until it was lost in the distance, it would seem to us interminably wearisome. When we go for a drive, we love to have it on some country road, either with high hedges or with trees that cut off a part of the prospect, giving us glimpses here and there of a trace of the promise of something new at every little fresh point along our journey.

If we are sailing across the sea, and it is one clear expanse of water, with what delight we hail a fish leaping into the air or a sail on the horizon,— anything that shall give us a new sensation, a relief from the monotony of passing one hour like another and another until the day's waiting is done! One of the most beautiful sails which I ever took was from Rockland to Mt. Desert; and the reason for it was that there you wend your way in and out among islands, and every fifteen minutes give you some more new and beautiful prospect, it seems to me, than any that has gone before.

And so, as we start on this new year, we would not know what is coming to-morrow or next week or next month. Leaving all else out of the account, we prefer to have the uncertainty for the sake of the beautiful surprises that may come to us at every turn.

But there are other reasons why I am glad I do not know. Had I known last New Year what this year was to bring, could I have faced it? I fear not, at least with courage or bravery. When trouble comes to us, burdens, sorrows, better that they should come unlooked for, better that we should face them as we turn around some sudden curve in our way, carrying with us courage, carrying with us joy, up to that point; for, then, we shall at least have a little strength with which to meet that which we might not otherwise be able to endure. So I thank God that the sorrows, the bereavements, the trials of life, come to us one by one, and come to us unexpected, come to us out of blue heavens, springing up on some smiling landscape, coming to us as shadows on a clear shining sky; for, then, we have some little strength with which to meet and bear them.

Suppose another kind of disappointment was anticipated, I wish you to note how it would take the very heart and significance out of our life. A man sits down to write a book, over which he has brooded, perhaps, for months or years. He fancies that he has found at last the solution to some great problem that has perplexed the brain of man. He undertakes to work this out. As a result, he is disappointed. The public receive the book fairly well, accords the man intelligence and good purpose, thinks perhaps that he has helped on the world's thinking. But he has not succeeded in realizing the dream that he cherished in his heart. Suppose he had known that, when he sat down to write the book. He would not have written half as good a book as he actually did,— perhaps, he would not have had the heart to undertake to write it at all.

In the case of an invention. A man discovers some new principle or puts in practical application some principle already known,— invents a machine. He believes that he has done a great thing for the world. It is only a partial success. The world accepts it and is glad of it, takes the help it can get from it, but goes on to something more. Now suppose the man had known beforehand that he was only going to accomplish what he actually did accomplish. It would have taken the heart all out of him; and he would have said, Why, this isn't worth while. The man who invented the first application of steam did a very slight thing as compared with the magnificent engines now in common use on every hand; but it was the first step towards the grand completion. And, although he did not realize the full success that he hoped for, yet he did help on the success of the world.

And so I take it that we are beneficently lured on by our hopes, which hopes are so commonly disappointed, into doing, not the magnificent thing we would like to do, but doing at least some little thing to make the world wiser, to make the world better, to accomplish a step in the advance

of humanity that is, by and by, to lead on to the perfection of the world. So, whatever way we look at it, it is well that we do not know the things that await us in the new year.

Let us enter upon it, then, with courage, with cheer, with strength, doing the best we can every day, being ready for disappointment, but knowing that we are contributing our mite to the growth of mankind. Some one has said that no man can do much, but he is under the highest obligation to do the little that he can.

There are two or three things that we are sure of in some general way as we look out into the new year. It is a mystery: it is like one in a fog at sea. We cannot see a ship's length ahead of us; and yet we know that certain things are to meet us. I know, and so do you, that bonds and afflictions abide us, as they did Paul. We know that sorrows are to come to us in this coming year. I do not say this to discourage you, but to ask you to brace yourself up with courage and to accept some theory of things, if you intelligently can, that shall make you strong enough to fight the battle of life and win. Sorrows are coming. Some of us are going to lose money during the coming year. Some of us are going to be disappointed in our ambitions: we are not going to obtain political office or the business position or preference that we hoped for. Some of us are going to be ill, some of us are going to lose those we love, some of us will have to face the last shadow for himself or herself.

Now in what spirit and with what purpose shall we face this general certainty in a year whose mystery hides the particular and the detail? There are three great theories of this universe, all of which have been accepted in turn by one or another. First, you can be a pessimist. You can believe that everything is all wrong, that the whole world is just as bad as it can be; and you can look out without hope, — look with bitterness, look with antagonism, upon the on-going of human affairs.

One thing I would like to suggest to a person who takes

this attitude of mind; that is, the question as to how in a bad world, a perfectly bad world, anybody ever came to find out that it was bad. If the world is utterly bad, how does it happen that somebody has discovered a standard of goodness by which to measure it and declare it bad? If it was utterly bad, there would be no good man in it to condemn it, there would be no magnificent ideals from the height of which to look down upon it. The very fact that we can see that the world is bad is absolute proof that at heart it is good. There would be no ideals of goodness otherwise.

But suppose it were utterly bad: what should we do about it? Since we can dream of goodness, we can try to realize those dreams. We can ourselves be better than the universe if to us it seems bad. We can create a little heaven where we live, at any rate, and make the people who are next about us bright and joyous and sweet and happy in their lives.

Let us take another theory of the universe; and that is the agnostic's theory or the materialist's theory. According to that the world is neither bad nor good: it is nothing but a great machine. It doesn't think about anybody or care about anybody. If you get in the way of its wheels, it will run over you. If you are able to manage the running of its machinery, that machinery will serve you; but, when it runs over you, it does not care, and, when it serves you, it does not care. It does not care about anything; for there is no heart in it and no brain in it. It simply happened so; and we must live in the midst of the play of these mighty forces, and do the best we can.

I have never found a man who claimed to occupy this position who was quite consistent. One of the strongest men who held that view whom I ever heard of said to me once in private conversation, "Nature, this beautiful Nature you are talking about, Nature is a hag." And he used a strong adjective before the word "hag." Think how utterly inconsistent! If Nature is unfeeling, if Nature does

not think, and if Nature does not know, then it certainly is not a hag, any more than a steam-engine is a hag. A hag is a person who is evil, who does know, and who purposes evil, and who loves it. And so you see how hard it is for a person occupying this position to be consistent even with his own thought.

But suppose the universe does not know and does not care and does not feel. You and I feel, you and I think, you and I care. We love, we understand the joy of love: we understand the pain and hurt of hate. We, then, in the midst of a universe like this, can lead sweet and loving and tender and helpful lives. We can make the world a little better for each other. We can make the path a little lighter by throwing the beams of our candle upon it. We can make the road a little easier for stumbling feet by removing obstacles. We can do something to make the world better. So, if the universe does not care, let us be ourselves gods, if there be no God; be ourselves a Providence for each other, if there is no Providence.

If we do not hold either of these two theories, then we must hold the third; and in the third there is no such thing as final evil. If God is, if there be a brain — speaking of course in figure — that thinks, if there be intelligence at the heart of things, if there be love at the heart of things, as we know there is omnipotent power, then pain and suffering and what we call evil can be nothing but incidents on the journey, can be nothing but the raw material out of which grand and noble and sweet things are some time to be wrought.

And do you know what I think of these three theories? I think the first one,— that of the pessimist,— as I said, is demonstrated to be absurd by the simple fact that there is one man in the universe to condemn it. And I think that the second one is demonstrated to be absurd because a universe that does not think and does not feel, and that is dead matter, cannot very well be the father and producer of

minds and hearts and souls and loves and tendernesses and pities and cares.

The only theory of this universe that is intellectually sane is the theory that makes God, goodness, love, truth, the heart and master of all things. And, if we carry that great conviction in our minds and that great faith in our hearts, then we can go out into the mystery of the year, knowing that, though bonds and afflictions abide us, and though death waits us before we cross the threshold of another year, it is all well.

I know, friends, it is not quite easy to say this always, when you face the great tragedies of life, when you come to look death in the face yourself or when you do the harder thing of saying good-by to one you love more than your life. It is not easy then to say, It is all well; but I know it is. I know that God, being God, must reveal that it is all well some day; and perhaps, had it happened otherwise, we should have seen before we got through that it was better as it was.

Let me pass to a somewhat brighter view of my theme. I not only know that sorrows and trials and troubles await us, but I know that happiness waits you and me in this coming year; and I am going to make a statement which perhaps you will hardly accept at first: I know there is a great deal more happiness waiting for you than there is of the opposite. It depends upon you, however, whether you will see it or not. I know that a great deal more happiness has been in the past life of every single person here than there has of the opposite. I know there has been more good and happiness in your lives during the past year than there has of the opposite; and I do not care what you have been through. But, as I said, it depends upon you whether you will find it or not.

There are a lot of common happiness-killers that I wish to refer to for a moment, to show you that what I am saying is true. We are so selfish, so self-centred,—perhaps not

selfish in a bad sense, except when we let it run into bad,— that we measure everything from our own personal point of view; and, unless everything happens to go just as we please, we think everything is going wrong. And we are so made that, anticipating always something better, we do not notice how sweet and good the present moment is. Most people forget the sunny, bright, pleasant, sweet hours and days, and remember the others. Shakspere has said,—

> "The evil that men do lives after them:
> The good is oft interred with their bones."

The same principle applies here. The evil hours of the past year, the unpleasant experiences,— these you keep with you, and dwell on them. How many times do you sit down and think over and count the sweet hours and blessed days? Did you ever do it in your life? I question it. You are all the time making up an indictment against the universe on the basis of things you do not like. Do you ever count up the reasons for gratitude on the basis of the things you do like? I question it. I know people, for example,— and this is the commonest kind of an illustration,— I have lived with people all the year, and I never in my life have known the weather to suit them. It is always, oh, such a dreadfully hot day! or it is so cloudy, or the wind is blowing from the wrong quarter, or there is a cloud hanging somewhere in the sky which is going to overspread the horizon, or it is raining when they wanted it fair, or it is snowing. It is never just what they wanted.

Now, if you stop and think about it, all the kinds of weather that distinguish the year are necessary to the beauty and glory of the world; and, if you think what constitutes each day, these phases of day and night, you will be finding yourself on your knees in wonder and marvel and adoration at the beauty and glory of the morning. A gray day, a rainy day, a stormy day, a windy day! Sit and think

of the marvel of it all, and how the universe conspires with this little planet of ours to produce these wondrous changes out of which spring the life and the beauty of the year.

We are conceited. Whether we own it or not, we are. The universe does not treat us quite as well as we in our hearts think it ought to. Turn the matter right around. What right have you to claim anything of the universe? What is the basis of your claim? The universe has treated me a thousand times better than I have deserved, because I have deserved of it nothing. What have I done for God or for the universe? It has given me health and happiness, and sunny days, and friends and love, and all the wondrous things that make up life. What have I done to deserve them? Nothing.

Then there is another source of our discontent. We have a thousand things; but we had set our hearts on some other little thing that we do not happen to have, and that poisons it all. I have seen a child sitting on the floor, surrounded by so many playthings that it could not get through with them in a day, crying its heart out because some one thing that it wanted is not there. Is not that a parable of our lives? Instead of being happy with things we have, we let ourselves be utterly miserable because of some other little thing that we do not happen to have.

And there is jealousy in our natures, if we let it have its way. Instead of enjoying our yard, the grasses and the flowers that grow and blossom there, do we not, to use it as a figure of speech, commonly go and lean over the fence and look into our neighbor's yard, and envy him the possession of things that he has that we have not, and make this a ground of complaint against the universe, against life, against God, and a source of bitterness that makes us unhappy, and ultimately the whole family and those around us less happy than they otherwise might be?

And, then again, we have never learned the lesson that life is concentrated in the passing instant. We have never

learned, we rarely learn, to be happy by the day. We are looking over our shoulder at the past, thinking what lovely times we did have last week or last year, or we are looking away ahead, and thinking what a lovely time we will have to-morrow or next week; and so we will let a past that does not exist, can never exist, or a future that does not exist and never will exist, rob us of the marvellous treasures of the present moment, the fleeting hour.

Consider for a moment. There never was a past and there never will be; and there never is going to be any future. The only time in which the universe or God or any human being ever existed, ever will exist, ever can exist, is the present passing instant; and, if you do not train yourselves to appreciate the wonder and glory of the passing instant, and find your satisfaction and your happiness there, then you will never find them in the universe in all the coming time. When to-morrow morning dawns, it will be now. When next year comes, it will be now. It always has been now, and it always will be now; and, if you are not happy now, you never will be.

I wish you all a Happy New Year; but I admonish you again that the question as to whether my wish will be realized rests almost exclusively with yourselves.

One other point I must speak upon for a few moments. The best thing of all I have kept to the last. Whatever else befalls us, comes to us, in this year that is ahead of us, one thing we are going to be absolutely sure of: we are going to find the new year full of opportunities. Opportunities for what? In the midst of sorrow, to be patient; in the midst of darkness, to trust; in hours of bereavement, to look to Him who is life in the midst of and beyond death. There will be opportunities for us to show how perfectly we can surrender something we have desired. There will be opportunities to serve our fellow-men. There will be persons that we can teach. We can help them when they are bewildered. We can assist them in solving some problem that perplexes the brain. We can make life a little easier for them. There are

persons that are sorrowing. We can speak some word of comfort that shall make life brighter to them. For I think, though the comforting word means so little, it at the same time means everything. For, when I know my fellow-men pity and would help if they could, I know that is a whisper out of the heart of God; and I can believe in him all the easier, and all the more. I can help people who have fallen, who stumble, who are discouraged. I can help people who are trying to lead noble and honorable lives, and who are ready to give up. I can have opportunities during the coming year for being of service to my fellow-men; and this is the grandest thing that any one can possibly desire.

If the old-time idea be true,— and I believe that in some shape it is, though the picture we have drawn of it may not be accurate,— if there be angels in the other world burning with devotion and love for the infinite life and truth and beauty and all good, the most angelic thing they can imagine, can dream of, can desire, is an opportunity to be of service. What do we think of as being part of the duty of an angel? It is the desire and the opportunity to serve. Is it not written of Jesus, as the grandest thing that could be said of him, that he went about doing good, that he made himself of no reputation? Did he not say, and teach us for all time, that it was customary among the nations for those who dreamed of greatness to wish that they might occupy high positions and dominate their brethren; but he said, It shall not be so among you: he that will be great among you shall be a servant, a minister; for that is what the word "minister" means. He that will be great in the kingdom of God, he that will be great according to the highest and finest ideals that the world has ever been able to catch a glimpse of, shall find the pathway of that greatness in an opportunity to be of some little help to his fellows; and Jesus taught us again that he that gave only a cup of cold water to some one thirstier than himself was doing the most divine thing of which the brain of man could conceive.

This year, then, is going to be full of opportunities for us to work out grand qualities in ourselves, divine qualities, by exercising those divine qualities in helping our fellow-men. I said a moment ago that I wished you all not only a happy, but I used the word "new" year. The year cannot be entirely new. We talk glibly of turning over a new leaf; but did it never occur to you that the book of our lives, instead of being of fresh, fair, new leaves on which we can write what we please, has been written all over before? Inheritance, disposition, will,— are we free in regard to these?

Paul said, "Behold, I go bound to Jerusalem." We go bound into the new year,— bound by the past. My grandfather, my great-grandfather, to the tenth, to the hundredth generation, is in my hand when I am trying to write, is in my brain when I am trying to think, is in my heart when I feel, is in the strength or the feebleness of my will when I face some new problem. We say grandly, as though we were masters of destiny, I can do as I please. Yes; but can you please rightly always? You can do as you will; but can you will rightly always? Are you masters of your will? You are victims of the past, of your own past. The evil you have wrought during the past year is by your side. It is over-shadowing you, it is moulding the work of your hand, it is shaping your thoughts, it is crippling your will.

I warn you, then, during the coming year to be true, faithful, right, to the last limit and the highest extreme, so that you may become more and more masters of yourselves, and enter upon the succeeding year stronger and completer than you enter upon the new year that opens to-day.

But, while I warn you of this limitation of your power, I wish to close with a word of cheer, summing it up in a verse of Browning. In a universe like this, with God at its heart, guiding its destiny,— remembering where we started, away down among the brutes, thinking of the magnificent things we have already achieved, how far we have come,— as we

look out toward the future, there is not anything that is extravagant in the way of expectation. There is not anything grand enough for you to believe in. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things that God has prepared for them that love him," says the old New Testament writer. Eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man, to conceive the things which science has prophesied as not only possible, but as sure to come in the way of mastery of the earth, in the way of self-mastery on the part of man. There is nothing too grand to dream of, nothing beyond the limits of the immortal child of the immortal God.

And then, beyond the limits of this life,— for some of us, all of us, indeed, must pass away before the dream of man is realized on this planet,— beyond the limits of this life come the times of realization; and, whatever ideal we had in our hearts, we may be sure we shall find it some day.

"Abt Vogler," that wonderful poem of Browning, sums it up in this one stanza: —

> "All we have willed or hoped or dreamed of good, shall exist;
> Not its semblance, but itself; no beauty, nor good, nor power
> Whose voice has gone forth, but each survives for the melodist,
> When eternity affirms the conception of an hour.
> The high that proved too high, the heroic for earth too hard,
> The passion that left the ground to lose itself in the sky,
> Are music sent up to God by the lover and the bard;
> Enough that he heard it once: we shall hear it by and by."

Dear Father, we thank Thee for the wonder of this hope, the grandeur of the trust we have the right to cherish. We consecrate ourselves to Thee, to helping each other, and so being God-like during the coming year. Amen.

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What is the Use of going to Church?

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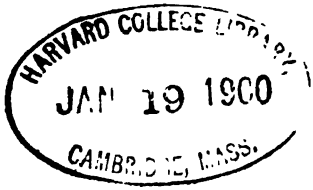

WHAT IS THE USE OF GOING TO CHURCH?

For a text I have selected from the tenth chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews the twenty-fourth and the twenty-fifth verses: "And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and good works; not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is, but exhorting one another; and so much more as ye see the day approaching."

The author of this book — who he may have been we have no means of knowing — tells us that Christians ought to be engaged in stirring up one another unto love and to good works; that they should not stay away from their assemblies, but meet together for the sake of these things,— exhort one another. And do it all the more because the day which they looked for — that is, the second coming of the Christ — was rapidly approaching. This is the teaching of the writer of this Epistle.

There has been, as you are all well aware, a great deal of discussion during the present winter, beginning last fall, concerning this matter of church attendance. It has been assumed that people do not go to church so much as they used to. I am not sure that this is true. So far as my experience extends, it is not true. I have no statistics by which I can test the assertion. If it is true, then it becomes a serious problem for those who believe in the Church, that it stands for something important, and ought to be supported.

The word in the New Testament which is translated

"church" is *ecclesia*, from which our word "ecclesiastical" is derived. It means simply a "meeting" or "assembly," a "congregation"; and the old New England word "meeting-house" is the simplest and clearest English equivalent for the place in which the church, or the *ecclesia*, assembles, with which I am acquainted.

Jesus himself organized no church. So far as we know, he said nothing about having one organized. He left no rules for its government. He said nothing as to what its officers or methods of administration should be. He did not, I think, have any idea of a church which should be in existence two thousand years after his day, with its sacraments, its creeds, its magnificent claims. We know that the disciples had no idea of any such thing; for, as indicated in the passage which I have taken as my text,—and this is only one indication of the many which are spread all over the surface of the New Testament,—it was the disciples' belief that the end of the present order was to come within a generation, that new heavens and a new earth were to take the place of the old.

If Jesus be correctly reported, there is no one thing which he taught with more emphasis, with more clearness, than that he was to be expected in the clouds of heaven before the generation to which he was speaking had passed away. That being so, of course the Christians of that day would never think of a great organization such as has existed and has dominated the civilized world. Of course, it would never have entered the minds of the people that there were to be sacraments, the partaking of which was supposed to be essential to salvation. It could never have entered their minds that this great power was to be stronger than kings, more far-reaching than any empire on the surface of the earth.

The churches, then, were not, in that sense, divinely appointed, divinely organized; though I believe that, in a deeper, a profounder sense, there is a divine meaning under-

lying the church organization, and a divine power working through it. I shall come to that after a little.

The churches sprang up in the most natural and simple way in the world. These who believed that Jesus was the Messiah, whom they had been waiting for, naturally came together, meeting on the day on which they believed that he had been seen after his death on the cross,— meeting to eat together the simple supper, a memorial of him, till he should appear in the heavens the second time.

When the generation that began this work had disappeared, the Church naturally took on a more permanent form of organization. Elders, prominent men, came to the front, to be its leaders. It was naturally shaped by the thought and the feeling of the stronger among the people. Creeds gradually grew up as expressing the beliefs of the majority, and rites and ceremonials took the shape with which we are historically familiar. But all this was just as naturally as forms of government grow to express the dominant thought, feeling, purpose, will, of the people that have to do with their organization.

You are well aware of the fact that, after the Church took its shape and became the mightiest power in Europe, people looked to it as able to do for them certain very remarkable things. It was the grandest power in the world to them. What could it do? The Church claimed to have the power to heal the sick. It could point out the way by which men could gain almost anything which they chiefly desired. It could guard the merchant on his travels and insure him safe conduct among strange peoples and in difficult and dangerous places. It gave seamen safety in their ships amid the storms upon the pathless sea. It dominated every phase of human life. It guarded the welfare of the farmers, assured them success with their crops. It could give them the needed rain. You see it held in its hands everything touching the common welfare of men.

And, then, beyond that what? The mightiest thing of

all, it held the power of the keys. It could stand and speak for God concerning the future life. It could open the gates of eternal felicity or close them in the face of despairing souls. Is it any wonder, then, that during these ages the practical question should never arise as to whether people did not go to church or as to whether they had better go or not? There was almost nothing which people eagerly, burningly desired which the Church could not give them or could not take away from them. The pope could lay a kingdom at once under interdict; and what did that mean? It meant that every man, woman, and child in the empire was cut off from hope here and hope hereafter forever. And thus he who sat in Peter's chair could bring the proudest monarch in Europe in abject submission to his feet.

This was the power of the Church in the Middle Ages. And some or all of these beliefs have been held concerning the Church until very modern times. Our Puritan ancestors in New England, our Dutch ancestors in New York, believed that God would send rain if the people prayed fervently enough for it, and their crops were in danger. They believed that by prayers safety could be assured in a voyage at sea. They believed that disease could be healed if people prayed fervently enough and followed the New Testament directions as to anointing with oil. They believed, all of them, that it was the office of the Church to speak for God concerning matters of eternal salvation in another life.

But we are facing to-day a tremendous change of human thought, of human feeling, concerning these great problems. I wish I could make it quite clear to you that the change, while much more radical than many people believe, is not nearly so radical as many others think. I believe that the question of health, that the question even of rain, within certain limits, that the question of prosperity at sea and on land, the raising of our crops,— all these matters depend still upon our knowing and obeying the laws of God. The principal,

the essential, fundamental thought is very little changed, but there is a very radical change in our conceptions as to the methods; and the Church, the old historic established churches of the world, represent to-day ideas which are no longer held by earnest and intelligent people. We do not believe that we can cure disease by prayer, by anointing with oil. We do not believe that we can insure the success of our crops by prayer, that we can make it rain or dry by prayer. We do not believe that we can insure the safety of a ship at sea by prayer. We do not believe that it is the great office of the Church to insure salvation even in the other life by its baptisms, its extreme unction, its sacraments, or any of its offices.

A great change has passed over the world concerning its thought about God, about man, and about the relations that exist between God and man; and there are large numbers of people who are wondering in their hearts as to whether the Church is to pass away, is to be uncrowned, is to lose its authority, to take a place of less dignity in human life.

It is this question which I wish to discuss this morning. We do not believe, the most of us, I take it, probably no one who is here believes in everlasting punishment for any one, whether he is a Christian or a pagan, whether he ever goes to church or not. The conception of a God capable of punishing one of his own children forever for being born of Adam, without his consent, or for not obeying a law that he never heard of, for not belonging to this particular church or that, or even for any kind of evil conduct,— this has passed away from our minds. We believe that God so loves all his children that somehow, some time, he will lead them to himself,— not without punishment, but through punishment. We are coming to believe, as some one has said, that men are not punished *for* their sins, but punished *by* their sins, and punished just as long as the law-breaking lasts, whether it is in this world or in

any other world. This is the kind of conception of the government of God which is taking the place of the old idea.

A friend of mine in Boston once said to me, "In the passing away of these old ideas, isn't the reason for church-going being lost?" A parishioner of mine in the West — I am not sure whether I ever quoted his saying to you — once remarked to me, "If there were no devil, in my judgment, there would not be a great many Christians." The idea, you see, being that the Church exists for the sake of saving us from the devil, and, if there were no devil, then we would not care anything about the Church. The Church exists to save people from hell; and, if we cease believing in hell, then there isn't any use in having a church. And I confess to you that this kind of logic is not very strange when we remember that for generation after generation this very conception of the Church, its place, its office in human life, has been preached and preached and drilled into the thought and the fear of the multitudes of men.

We have been told, If you do not believe in the infallibility of the Bible, if you do not believe in the infallibility of the Church and its sacraments, then the Church is going to pass away: there is no use for its existing any more. The people, I say, have been taught this to such an extent that the great wonder to me is not that some people believe it and stop going to church when they are not driven any longer by fear, but that the great mass of people do not believe it, and follow the logic of it and so stay away from church. If the churches are beginning to be thinned and deserted, I believe that it is this kind of logic on the part of the teachers of the Church which is largely responsible for it.

But this disbelief in everlasting punishment, from which the Church has been supposed specially to save us, has not passed away from churches called liberal. Dr. Lyman Abbott, for example, has said recently that he believes that

God will save every single human soul that he possibly can save. The only thing that keeps him from being a Universalist is a question lingering in his mind as to whether man is not free enough to defy the omnipotent God, and go wrong forever. He believes that any one God can influence and control, he will influence and control, and finally save.

I would like to note that it seems a curious conception of the universe that God should create one that slips out of his hands, and which he cannot ultimately control; and, also, I wonder whether Dr. Abbott ever thought how this touches the use of prayer in an orthodox church. Why should I pray for the salvation of somebody's soul, when God, with the utmost endeavor, may not be able to answer my prayer? That, however, simply in passing.

I wish now, taking the liberal position which we hold, that the Church is a voluntary organization, that it grew up naturally out of the condition of things that existed after the death of Jesus,— the liberal position that its sacraments and its creeds are not of divine appointment and infallibility,— the liberal position that the Church has no power in itself of saving the souls of men in another life from an imaginary fire,— on this liberal position I propose to stand for a moment this morning, and ask as to whether, even with us, the reason for church-going is passing away,— to try to find out what the use is of a church.

And in the first place let me remark that religion is not something that depends upon this particular belief or that about the next world. Religion is universal. So far as we can see, in the very nature of things, it is a permanent and eternal element in human life. It never can pass away. And religion will express itself outwardly in some sort of body and form. That body, that form, will be determined by the feelings and the beliefs of the particular age which gives it its expression. In some countries, as you know, there are outdoor altars, uncovered temples, places where

oracles are consulted, there are gorgeous temples and magnificent rituals. Among the Jews there was the Temple of Solomon; and now there is the synagogue scattered all over the world wherever the tribes have been scattered. In Christendom it is the church, starting from and modelled on the synagogue. Religion gives itself, then, an expression natural to the time. Its forms, its ceremonies, its creeds, may change; but, because the Church changes its form, that does not mean that the great essential thing for which it stands is in danger or is passing away.

To use a very simple figure, which I may have used before: Suppose you change your conception of astronomy. We changed from the old Ptolemaic theory to the Copernican theory, and, instead of placing the world at the centre, we placed the sun there; but the stars have not been put out: they do not shine with any less brightness or beauty. We change our conception of botany: does it change the forms of the flowers? We change our conception of government; but government and human order continue. So we may change our conceptions of the religious life. Our thought about God may grow, expand, clarify. Our thought about man may be completely revolutionized. Instead of believing in the fall, we believe in the ascent. We may believe in a grand destiny for every human soul. But this does not destroy religion, or the relations between God and man. Even if your thought of God changes, if you are an agnostic, and you only recognize some power manifested in the universe that you do not care to personify or name, still religion is not thereby destroyed. This essential relation which exists between man and the Infinite Power is a universal and eternal relation; and all the things that man desires, from health of body and sanity of mind to nobleness of heart and spirit, all of these depend upon the degree of our clearness, of our apprehension, of the truth of the relation that exists between us and the Infinite Power, and obedience to that Power.

Religion, then, cannot pass away; and so the Church, or that for which the Church stands, is something that is to be universal and eternal. I believe when we are through with this transition epoch, this confusion of thought, ideas, and theories through which we are passing, we are to have a grander and nobler church than the world has ever seen. Meanwhile, what shall liberals do, what shall the free, clear thinkers of the world do, those who fear not in the old sense, but in a sense of reverence and in the light of the deeper meanings of life? Shall they desert the churches? Remember, it is not a question of church or no church, it is a question of what kind of a church. If you leave the expression of the religious life in the hands of the superstitious, the ignorant, those who are afraid, do you not see that you are degrading the religious life of your age? While if you do not forsake the assembling of yourselves together, while if you use the power of organization in the religious life that you put in your business, you can play your part in helping lift up and lead on the world to something grander and finer than it has ever yet attained.

The old Church — and this, briefly, is my second point — claimed to be the depository of God's truth and its witness to men. This hints the claim of another thing which the Church can do by way of service to the world. The Church stands for God's truth, as nothing else in all the world does or can stand. It is the depository of God's truth and its witness to the world; for, mark you, it is not the business of any other organization on the face of the earth to stand for, to teach, to witness to the particular kinds of truth that are specially needed by men in so important a way as it is the office and work of the Church to do that.

There are a good many kinds of truth. It is not the business of the Church to teach astronomy. It is not the business of the Church to teach botany or chemistry or science of any kind, except as these things touch on or illustrate the religious life. It is the business of the Church to teach that

kind of truth which bears on the solution of the ethical and religious problems of man. And what part do these play in human life? Matthew Arnold was accustomed to say, and he rang his changes on the same until it has become familiar to all his readers, that conduct is, at least, three-fourths of life. It is the business of the Church to teach the truths of God as they bear upon human conduct, to hold up before men high and noble standards of living, to teach men what they ought to do and why they ought to do it, to teach them the great ethical principles of the world, on which its happiness and welfare depend more than upon anything else.

It is well for us to have money. I wish all of us had a great deal more. I have nothing to say against money. It is well for us to have what we call intellectual culture. It is well for us to have social success. It is well for us to be amused and entertained, for us to have all the things we desire. Beautiful houses, to be adorned with fair clothing,— all these things are fine and well. But the one thing that human happiness and welfare depend upon more than upon all these is that these shall be made to minister to human thought, to human feeling, to human action, to how men treat each other, the relation in which they stand to each other, the feelings that inspire those relations, whether they be hate or love or indifference. There is no other organization with which I am familiar that undertakes to stand for human conduct, to teach the great principles of human life.

There is another thing. The Church is an association, if it be true to its mission, that helps its members to live the life of the spirit. What do I mean by that? We talk very glibly sometimes about spiritual and material, without stopping to think very clearly as to what we have in mind. We talk about the spirit of man; and commonly, perhaps, we think of that part of him which is supposed to live after the body has died. We talk about spiritual things; and a great many people understand us to refer to the Church and Sunday and Bible-reading and prayer-meetings and

the other religious exercises of the world. I do not mean any of these things, when I speak of the spirit. I mean those invisible, intangible qualities of human life which are above the animal and which constitute distinctively the human.

You will remember, perhaps, what I have said in this place before, that a man is not a man — literally, I mean it — until he climbs up into the moral and spiritual part of his nature; for he shares all the rest of him with the animal world around him. A man may be a cultured animal, he may be a splendidly dressed animal, he may be a magnificently housed animal, he may be an experienced and travelled animal, he may be able to accumulate so much of the good of this world, as we are accustomed to call it, that he shall hardly know what to do with it,— he may do all of these things, and still be only an animal, living in the animal range of his being. It is only when he comes up where he thinks and feels and loves and hopes and cares, up in this invisible and intangible realm, that he enters on his inheritance as a man; and it is the great work and business of the Church to stand for these things.

The constant temptation of men, the constant tendency, is to become lowered, to become secularized, to become engrossed in the affairs of this life; and the man who wishes to cultivate himself up here, it seems to me, must give some special time to it. It is well to have some special place where those things are considered. The things that you do any time are the things you never do at all. If you wish to accomplish anything, you give it some special time and place and care. And so, if you wish to cultivate this life of the spirit, to live in the high and fine things that cannot pass away, then it seems to me that you may naturally and well turn to the Church as the one organization that is the inspirer of these very things.

It seems to me — I do not know, having had no experience in that direction — that, if I were a professional man, a business man, a man of leisure, a writer of books, an actor of

plays, engaged in any of the ordinary and what we call secular pursuits of life, it would be an immense relief to me sometimes to get out of that; to get away from the grind and care; to go into some place consecrated, set apart to higher things,— things that we all know and confess are high; to get into the atmosphere of the spiritual life, the eternal, the changeless things; to go apart and rest; to remember for a little time that we are men, that we are women, that we are not simply lawyers or doctors or merchants or writers, that we are men, that we are women, and enter upon the inheritance of our manhood and our womanhood.

There is another thing the Church stands for distinctively, always has stood for, always will; and that is the idea of worship. And worship, when you analyze it, is not only one of the most natural things in the world, but is almost more important than any other quality that we can point out. I think I have told you before that man is the only creature on earth that has an ideal, who is haunted by dreams, who imagines things better than he has ever seen. The tendency, scientific people tell us, always is for every creature to become adjusted to its environment. This is true of fishes, of birds, all the lower world around us: everything becomes adjusted ultimately to its environment. If its environment happens to be better, then it becomes better: if its environment is lower, it is degraded. If it cannot become adjusted to its environment, it is destroyed. This is the tendency universal everywhere. But man, who is greater than these, can create a new environment. He can dream out a better world than he has ever seen or known, and can begin to create it; and, as he does this, he lifts, he grows, he becomes gradually adapted to this higher and finer environment.

So do you not see the part that the element of worship plays in human life? Worship is admiration for what we feel to be above us,— the admiration with which a pupil may regard his teacher, an artist his master, any one some

other that is leading a life that he looks upon with wonder and regards as better than that which he himself is leading. Worship, then, is more than the matter of opening a book and singing a hymn, of a bended knee or closed eye. All these may be expressions, manifestations, of the worshipping spirit, or they may not. They may be mere dead forms, with no worship in them. But the worship is the uplift of thought and soul: it is admiration for that which is higher and finer than we. And this is the one thing for which the Church stands, in a way that is more represented by it than by any other human organization.

So let us stand by the Church for the sake of human growth, human advance: it is that which is the secret of civilization. What does it mean that the world, slowly, or so slowly, age after age, is becoming civilized? Animals do not become civilized. Birds do not become civilized. Men have in them, as I have said, this power of looking up, this ideal, this ability to admire something above them; and so age after age the race ascends, lifts, sloughs off the old and the animal, a little more and more of the selfish, a little more and more of the crude. It begins to think more nobly, to feel, to consecrate itself more unselfishly; and so the world becomes civilized. Worship, then, for which a true church stands, is the very secret and heart of civilization.

One other thing. I wonder whether I can make it clear and tangible to you, as it has become to my own thought. The Church has, as one of its offices, the helping of us to get into helpful relations with God. I told you at the outset that the essence of religion is right in there, concerns the relations existing between the soul and God. The Church has the power, by its spiritual teaching and guidance, to help us get into right — that is, helpful — relations with God in every department of our being. I said that the old idea of being healed of our diseases merely by prayer has cast away. I think, if we study the laws of God in our bodies, and get into right relations with God here, just in so far as

we can do it, we gain help. Just in so far as we can get into right relations with God in the conscience, the moral nature, we become righteous and pure. Just in so far as we can get into right relations with God in our affectional nature, we love that which is lovely and divine; and, as we get into right relations with God in our spiritual nature, we become his children, conscious of his life, conscious of his power to help and uplift us. And this, it seems to me, is the grandest thing in all the world.

It may not take away all our burdens, it does not relieve us of pain and suffering entirely; but one thing it does do. If we cannot be free from all these things,—and we have come to know God as our Father,— we can let him clasp us in his arms, so to speak, lay our head upon his bosom, and wait and bear and be patient, and let the suffering and the trial work out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

I believe, friends, that it is a practical, real thing, in the light of the scientific laws of this universe, for us to get into these close, personal, helpful relations with God. And it gives life a meaning, it lifts it on to a plane of dignity and power, it takes away the sense that we are orphans and played upon by mighty and irresponsible forces over which we can have no control. It runs a flood of light and sanity through human life, and leads up to the gate which is ajar, and which is opening into something finer and better beyond.

And one other thing. I said I do not believe in everlasting punishment. I cannot, and believe in God at the same time. But I do believe in results of actions. I do believe that it makes all the difference in the world how we think and feel and live. I do believe in preparation for death, preparation for another life. I do not believe in simply putting some water on my head and changing my character, or having a priest anoint me with oil in my last extremity, or some one coming and praying over me, as though that were

going to be of any virtue. I do not believe that my destiny depends upon a spasm of feeling. I do not believe it depends upon my rejection or acceptance of any creed. I do not believe that it depends upon any formal belief in God or my finding myself clouded and troubled so that I cannot believe. I believe it does consist in my cultivating and training those qualities and characteristics that are going to keep on and live when this body is left behind. I believe that we are going to suffer in the next world the results of our wrong-doing, just as long as we keep on in wrong-doing, whether it is one year or a million. And I believe that, if we wake up in that other life without having trained ourselves at all in those parts of us that live,— the spiritual side of our natures,— that it may be a year, it may be a generation, it may be a thousand years for aught I know, before we have come up into fitness for our surroundings, before we are ready to live in that new and higher life.

To take a very poor figure by way of illustration. Suppose you were on board a steamer to see a friend off and the steamer sailed without your knowing it, carrying you with it; and presently you found yourself *en route* for some far-off land, whose people, whose language, whose ways and customs, you were entirely unprepared for, and you were compelled to stay there. It might be a long time before you were fit for such enjoyment as the inhabitants of that place were capable of. So, if we go out into the other life with no spiritual training, without the quality of love being developed in us, without the divine side of us being unfolded, it seems to me it may be a land of darkness and desolation for a period of time extending I do not know how long. At any rate, it seems to me that it is worth while for us, knowing that we must go, to devote a part of our time at least to getting ready for that journey, particularly since we know that, if we exist at all, what we call the soul, the spiritual side of us, is that which is going to exist and constitute us what we are.

For all of these things, then, the Church is to stand, whatever may be the change of thought and theory concerning God or the universe or human nature. None of these things are likely to change or pass away. Jesus said, "I am come that ye might have life, and that ye might have it more abundantly." And so his Church is in the world to give men life, to teach them how to obey the laws of God on which all life, physical, mental, moral, spiritual depends. And by as much as we associate ourselves together to work for these things, to help not only the development of them in ourselves, but in others, by so much do we cultivate the divine life which makes us what we are here, and which shall fit us for all the glory that shall follow.

Our Father, we ask that we may see the beauty and the meaning of this higher life that brings us into relation with Thee, and which links us in these higher ranges with our fellow-men, and so creates an association of the sons and daughters of God; and may we be glad to do what we can to help on the work of this association, and so bring the time when darkness and sorrow and wrong shall be only memories of the past, and the light and love of God shall fill the earth! Amen.

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The Function of Faith

GEO. H. ELLIS
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THE FUNCTION OF FAITH.

My Scripture starting-point may be found in the first verse of the eleventh chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews; "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."

This is a most remarkable definition, and one that I believe will bear the closest scrutiny. We do not know who is its author, and it does not matter. We shall have occasion to inquire into it a little more in detail farther on.

I wish to remark at the outset that "faith" is almost the worst abused word in the English language. Perhaps nine times out of ten, when people use it, they have not given any careful thought as to its meaning, are not at all sure they are using it in any legitimate way. You will find extreme religionists, on the one hand, who are exalting its power, its office, misusing it at one extreme. On the other hand, perhaps you will find the extreme rationalist who is thinking that it is a word that has no right to any part in an honest and earnest human life. I wish to take up a few words that are sometimes misused in connection with this, or confused with it, that we may come at a clear conception as to what faith really is, and the part which it ought to play in our human life.

Many times, when people use the word "faith," they ought to say "credulity." When people say that it is wicked to doubt, and that we ought always to believe, they are certainly not having any legitimate use of "faith" in mind. That which they declare ought to be our state of mind, if you look at it calmly, is really credulity,— the credulous acceptance without criticism or question of whatever

is given us by that which claims to be authority. The human mind, from the beginning of the world, instead of showing too much tendency towards doubt, has shown altogether too ready a tendency, not towards faith, but towards credulity. It is the attitude of the child-mind to believe almost anything that is told it and by anybody. This you can prove to be true by a little experiment with almost any child. And why? A child is naturally trustful. It has had no experience that would make it suspicious. And, on the other hand, note that it has no knowledge of the world in which it lives that gives it any standard of judgment or probability. A child loves fairy stories and wonder tales. And no child in the world, I believe, is fonder of them than I am, even to this day. Only I recognize them as fairy stories and wonder tales. But a child lives in a fairy story world: "Alice in Wonderland," "Jack and the Beanstalk." To the child there is no improbabilty in anything. It does not stop to raise a question. It has no knowledge of any laws, limits to that which can rationally be supposed to happen; and so it is inclined to believe almost anything you tell it.

The attitude of the child-world was similar to the child of to-day. The child-man knew nothing of any system of nature or what we call natural laws: he had no standards by which to test things, as to whether they were probable or improbable; and so whatever came to him from authority, that which he recognized as authority, was readily enough accepted, and all the more if it claimed to have a religious sanction. For we rightly regard religion as that one thing in human life most to be revered; and, if the child-man was told by the priest, by the representative of his religion, that such and such a thing was true on the authority of the gods, he not only bowed reverently before it, but he was afraid to question it, because he was told that the anger of the gods would be visited upon him for this, which they would regard as an insult. And so from that day to this men have had

the wrath of God held over them as a threat, if they dared to question that which the constituted — and generally self-constituted — authorities have declared to be the word, the will, the purpose, of the Almighty.

So from the very beginning — and you see how natural it has been — men have been inclined to believe altogether too much, to believe altogether too easily, to believe that which had no pretension that it could bring any evidence; and for this reason the world has been wandering this way and that, following one path, following another path, not having any means or method by which it could be settled as to whether it was on the right road to anything desirable.

And this state of mind is very common to-day. People have an idea — I greatly wonder at it when I stop to think — that they have a perfect right to believe anything that they happen to take a notion to. Somebody comes along, and announces a new idea. They say, "I like that, I will believe it." They accept it and begin to propagate it, talk about it among their friends. What right has any man to accept credulously any statement as true unless it brings its credentials, unless it can authenticate itself, unless it can establish itself as true? Thus men presume, because they happen to take a fancy to an idea, to mislead mankind and allow themselves to be misled in every direction and concerning all the great problems that touch human welfare. Men have been wandering in every direction — in religion, as to political life, as to industrial matters, as to social problems, as to all sorts of questions — merely because they were credulous, because they felt that they had a right to accept anything that happened to come along as truth.

Friends, I not only believe that this state of mind is irrational, I believe it to be immoral. You have no right to accept a thing merely because you like it or take a fancy to it. You have no right to accept as true that which cannot offer adequate evidence in its behalf. Truth, and truth alone, is sacred,— not whims, not fads, not beliefs, not credu-

lously accepted opinions: truth only is of God; and the over-belief which leads you away from truth is just as bad as the over-doubt which prevents your accepting it.

Trust comes very near to faith, though it is not quite identical with it. "Trust" is a word that we apply almost entirely to people. We do not trust in things. I may, for example, trust in a bridge, as I say when I step on it to cross a stream. It is not the bridge I trust: it is the people who built it,— their integrity, their wisdom, their ability. I have trust in a bank, which does not mean I have trust in the institution itself, but in the people who have incorporated it and carry it on. So this trust is a state of mind in which we are towards persons.

Let me now say a word in regard to belief. Belief is not knowledge: it may be, it may not. I have a hundred beliefs as I stand here this morning, which I am not able absolutely to verify. I hold them tentatively. I have investigated the matters so far as I can. I have not the means of finding out as to whether the things I believe in are finally settled or not. The probabilities look that way; and I hold them tentatively, and wait for proof. But, if I am honest, I must hold my mind open concerning anything that is not absolutely and finally established. As I said, truth is the only thing that is sacred. I must hold my mind open, then. If some one comes along and can explain my beliefs in some better way, I must thank him for it, although he puts me to trouble, because he helps me on the road towards the attainment of truth. I believe because, as I said, the evidence seems to preponderate in that direction; and I go out and work on that belief, accept it practically, test it in every sort of way, until I find out that it is wrong, and then I discard it, and find that which is really true.

Now what is knowledge? Here, again, is a word very much abused. People say, I *know* such a thing is true. What do they mean? A great many times they mean only

that they have a very strong persuasion that it is true: they are inclined to accept it. Nobody knows anything until it has been scientifically investigated, until it has been demonstrated to be true. There are certain impressions which we have first hand, of which we feel very sure. For example, I look at a certain thing; and I say, I know that it is a certain color. Do I? I have a very strong persuasion as to the color; but I have learned by careful study that there is such a thing as color-blindness, and, until I have investigated and found out as to whether I am suffering from that affliction or not, I am not perfectly certain of the color of the thing I am looking at, or until I test it by the senses of somebody else and see if they corroborate the impression I have received.

For ages — and this bears on the reliability of our great first hand impressions, received through the senses as to what is true — men were perfectly certain that the earth stood still and was flat, and that the sun moved about it. If you questioned any one on the subject, they would have said: "Why, I know. Can't you see?" Of course you could see; but we have found out by investigating that this first-hand impression of the senses was wrong, and the people who for so many ages thought that they knew didn't know at all. So we do not know anything absolutely until it is scientifically investigated and demonstrated as true.

Faith, then, you see, is not credulity. It is not trust. It is not belief. It is not knowledge. Let us come to it now, and try to get a clear thought about it in our minds, and then see the function that it performs in human life, the place that it rationally occupies.

I was talking some years ago with a well-known Romish priest, at that time connected with the cathedral in Boston. He said to me: "Mr. Savage, it is either your position or mine. There is no half-way ground; and, were it not for my faith in the Church, I should occupy the position you do." Is that a legitimate use of the word "faith"? Has a man a right to

say that he has faith in the Church, and that that leads him to occupy the position he does? Let us note for a moment. Suppose we wish to find out whether the Church is infallible. Shall we shut our eyes, and accept somebody's statement about it? Is that the way to do? This man had come to believe that the Church was infallible, and so accepted the Church instead of following his reason. Has he a right to shut his eyes, and accept the statement of somebody that the Church is infallible? That is not faith: that is credulity. Is this a legitimate use of the word "faith"?

Let us see. The Church has existed as an historic institution, just as the government of Germany has existed or as the British Association has existed. In other words, to find out whether the Church has been infallible or not, what would you do? You would go and inquire, would you not? You would trace its history: you would find out the position it occupied concerning this subject or that. The question of the authority of the Church is a question of fact and evidence, a question of criticism, purely an intellectual problem, as much an intellectual problem as the distance between the earth and the moon. Would you accept the statement of somebody as to the size of a star or the composition of light on faith? It is a question of fact,— something to be investigated,— not a question of faith. Faith has no business to deal with a problem of that sort at all.

Let us take another kind of problem. There has been a great deal of talk this winter, you know, as to the Higher Criticism, which deals with the authorship and authenticity of certain Biblical books. The New York *Sun* has been telling us, through a very able writer, all winter long, that the way to settle this question is by faith. I ventured to ask the *Sun* how I could be absolutely certain as to the infallibility of the Church except by investigating; and they told me, "By faith." I could be absolutely certain of the infallibility of the Bible by faith, this writer said over and over again. The stories that the Bible tells are, some of

them, on their face absurd: they oppose reason and experience,— for instance, the story that at the order of a prophet the metal head of an axe rose from the bottom of a stream and floated on the water. Of course, nobody would believe that as a rational statement. Nobody can accept the story of Jonah as a rational statement. But this writer says, You must accept them "by faith." Faith takes you into another kind of world, where there are no standards of probability; and you must enter that world with your eyes shut, and believe everything that is told you about it after you get there. That is the attitude of these men towards faith.

Now the question of the authenticity of a book in the Bible is a matter of criticism. It was written at a certain time. We can find out when it was written or we cannot. We can find out by whom it was written or we cannot. We can find out about it all we can; and beyond that say we do not know. Take a more important question,— the birth of Jesus. Was he born like other men, or was he born without any human father? Here, again, they tell us that we must accept, on peril of our immortal souls, on faith. Again I say faith has nothing whatever to do with problems of this sort. It is a question of fact, a question of evidence. We must try to find out. If we cannot find out about it, then, if we are honest, we must say that we do not know. And certainly, if God be our Father, he is not going to punish us forever because we do not know something which he has made utterly inaccessible to us.

Faith, then, has nothing to do with proplems of this sort. Let me give one or two illustrations out of the range of religion, so that we may see how natural this is; for faith is not something that concerns the religious life alone: it is one of the most important things in every department of our secular life as well. I hear a man accused of having told a lie. I say, I do not believe it. You ask me if I know the man. I say, No, I never saw him before. Then do you not see I am talking absurdly? I have no right to an opinion on

the subject at all. If I say, I have faith in the man's veracity, I am not using the words in their legitimate meaning. If, however, I have known the man for years, and I say, I do not believe it, because I have faith in that man, I am talking reason. Faith is based on something here; and I have a right to have faith in him.

Suppose I think of ascending Mont Blanc. A guide comes and offers himself to take me over the difficult path, and says he will bring me back again in safety. I say: All right. I have faith in you: I will go. Somebody asks me if I ever saw the man before. I say, No. Do you know whether he has ever been to the summit and back again? I say, No, but I have faith in him. Do you not see that I am merely talking nonsense? But suppose a man comes, and I know he has taken party after party there in safety. I do not know at all that he will take me there in safety. I do not know but something may happen on the journey, and I may leave my body buried in the snows; but I start out, and I start reasonably, with my brains in full possession and my sanity untainted, because I have a reason for my faith. It is faith, you see: it is not knowledge; but it is faith based on something,— faith rationally held, faith followed with clear-eyed intelligence. And this is the only proper way in which the word "faith" should ever be used.

Now let us look at the definition given us in the first verse of the eleventh chapter of Hebrews: "Faith is the substance of things hoped for." Substance,— that which stands under, which holds up, which supports. Faith is the rational ground of our hopes. It is the evidence — that is, the persuasion — of the reality of something not yet seen. Do you not see how faith becomes one of the most reasonable operations of the human mind? Not credulity, not accepting things blindly, not accepting things, as we say, "by faith," that are not to be tested by faith at all; but faith is the grandest, or one of the very grandest, of the functions

of the human mind. And it is to be held reasonably and treated reasonably and followed reasonably, not against reason nor above reason, not outside of reason, but as a rational faculty of the mind.

Now I wish to speak of two or three departments of human life in which we specially need this fact, this reality, of faith. They tell us that we ought to have faith in God. This I believe with my whole soul. But what do we mean by it? If, as I carefully study the facts of this universe, they seem to me to lead away from a belief in God, I should be compelled, as an honest and religious man, to follow them. As I carefully study science, the universe, the history of the world, the history of man, it seems to me to be scientifically demonstrated that there is at the heart of things intelligence, life, love, goodness, pity, care,— all that we mean when we say "God." This I believe to be scientifically demonstrated. But this is not quite what we mean by having faith in God. I want faith in God for to-day, for to-morrow, for fighting my life battle. For you see how practical a thing it is. If I believed that the universe was not a reasonable thing, if I believed it was against the things that are finest and best, if I believed that it was simply utterly indifferent, I would do nothing: all the heart would be taken out of me. I should have no power of initiative, no perseverance, no faith to face obstacles, no trust in which I could conquer whatever opposition might come against me. But I believe in the universe. I have faith in it, faith in its sanity, faith in its goodness, faith in the fact that on the whole and in the long run, in spite of appearances and difficulties, it is on the side of the highest and finest and best things. And with this faith I can go on to conquer. I can accomplish almost everything because I believe that the Omnipotent Power is back of me, is under me, holding me up, and is on the side of the highest and finest things which I attempt.

There is another thing that we need to have faith in, if we are to live a true and grand life; and that is humanity,— faith

in men, faith in women. Lincoln was a splendid illustration of this. You remember he said he believed that the people could be led astray very easily. He said you could fool all the people part of the time, you could fool a part of the people all the time, but he did not believe you could fool all the people all the time. There is the expression of a rational faith in humanity. He did not endow the average man with any transcendent qualities. He did not believe he was very wise or very great or above ordinary temptations; but he believed that the great mass of the plain people meant well, that they cared for truth on the whole, and that they would stand by that which they were convinced was right on the whole. And with that great faith he committed his cause to these plain people; and they responded.

The man who believes that every other man except himself is dishonest, that every man has a price, that every woman at heart is untrue, the man who believes that he cannot trust the intelligence of the people in the long run, of course cannot accomplish any great thing, because of the lack of this underlying faith that makes achievement in his view possible.

There is another thing that we need to have faith in, and that is ourselves; and this, if you note with a little care, is quite another thing than conceit. It does not mean conceit. This kind of faith may be a very humble thing; but I believe that I am a son of God. Whatever has been developed in me yet, however poor and feeble my performance, because I am a son of God, I believe that all divine things are possible to me. You see it is not conceit at all: it is humility. I may not be able to do it in the sense that I alone can accomplish some great thing; but I believe that I may be made an instrument of accomplishment. Napoleon, for example, with that great faith in himself,— which probably had more to do with his victories than almost anything else, leaving out of account his intellectual power,— did not hold

it egotistically. He believed that he had been appointed. I am not discussing the truth of his belief. He had faith in the belief that he was destined to be an instrument to achieve certain things.

George Eliot is not ordinarily regarded as a religious woman, in the common acceptance of the term. She was an agnostic, and very sceptical. But she says that, concerning the very best things she ever did, she always had a feeling that she did not do them, that she was merely an instrument, some power was working through her. It is said that the elder Dumas would sometimes be caught by his friends intensely interested and amused by the sayings and doings of his own characters, which had a life of their own outside of himself.

If we are to live in this world, then we must have this great faith in ourselves,— faith that we can accomplish something or that there is something to be accomplished through us. If we have not yet attained any great thing, we must have faith that some great thing is possible for us, if not here in this life, then somewhere beyond.

Now let us note a few things that this faith can accomplish practically. Faith has the power to create facts; for without faith we should attempt nothing. You see how important a part it is, then, in any and every human life. Faith has the power to create facts that but for faith would never have existed. Take the case of the inventor, Elias Howe. He had faith in the principles of the mechanics involved; and he had faith in himself as applying those principles, and believed that he could invent a machine whose use, he foresaw, would be an untold relief to the weary and burdened world. And because of this faith he followed his ideal, he pursued his dream month after month, year after year, until he created a new addition to the world's resources. A young man, if he has no faith in himself, may simply let go of everything, lose his ideals, drop down on to a low and commonplace level of life. But, if he

believes in God, in the universe, in humanity and the possibilities of his life, if he believes in the fact that something can be accomplished, then this faith externalizes itself, and becomes incarnated in magnificent deeds.

There are persons in this audience this morning who, starting poor, with almost nothing but their intelligence, their bare hands, and their faith in the universe and in themselves, have created great industries. Towns, railroads, institutions, exist because of their faith; and but for that faith these things would never have been.

Faith has power to turn defeat into victory in the individual case and in the mass. You remember that wonderful story of Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress." One of the most significant incidents in the life of the Pilgrim is where he falls into Doubting Castle and gets into the hands of Giant Despair; and he lies down, and is ready to die. Do you not see that doubt in this sense, practical doubt which keeps people from trying, despair which leads them to give up,— give up character, hope of being anything, of doing anything, of accomplishing anything,— this is worse than crime? It is the most disastrous and deadly thing in all the world. But the moment that Pilgrim plucks up heart, he puts his hand into his bosom and discovers a key there called Hope; and he unlocks the door and escapes, and keeps on his journey until he arrives at the Celestial City. He turns his defeat into victory by faith.

See how it works with an army. The story has been often referred to, to illustrate a great many different points. I do not know whether it has been used to illustrate this particular one or not. I refer to Sheridan at Winchester. The army was scattered, disheartened, disorganized; and Sheridan appears on the scene. What appeared on the scene? There were just as many men there, with one exception, before Sheridan arrived as there were afterwards; just as many guns, swords; just as much ammunition; just as many feet and arms; just as much physical power. That which

appeared on the scene and turned defeat into triumph was simply faith. Faith in what? Faith in Sheridan. Was it blind relief? No. Suppose the grandest general that ever lived,— Napoleon, Cæsar, Marlborough, Wellington,— another man, had appeared: could he have rallied the soldiers? No. Why? They might have had no faith in him: they might not have known who he was. Suppose Sheridan had never won any victories: could he have rallied the troops? No, and he ought not then to have rallied them. Sheridan had led his troops to victory so many times that the men had faith in him; and whatever he said reanimated them, as though ten thousand troops had arrived by way of re-enforcement. And it was nothing but this intangible faith that did it all.

It is faith which is at the heart of every discovery. Let us take the familiar story of Columbus, and see the function of faith there. Suppose Columbus had never studied the question as to whether this earth was round or flat. Suppose he had known nothing of any voyagers that had preceded him, of any attempts to sail out over the unknown. He could have had no faith then. There would have been no reason for faith. It would have been an absurd, a wild, a desperate scheme for him to start towards the west. But now see what a reasonable thing faith is. Columbus was a practical navigator. He had read the voyages of those who had gone before. He had studied the question whether this world was round or flat until he had been persuaded that it was round. The Church and the archbishops were against him; — and there is a point as to whether the Church is infallible or not, if any one chooses to use it. They were all against him; but Columbus had studied the problem until his mind was made up that the world was round, and, if it was round, he knew he could find India by sailing west. And so this was not a matter of demonstration. It had not been proved then; but Columbus believed that reason pointed that way. And he believed, had so much

faith in it, that he sailed, in the face of all obstacles, all prediction of disaster, and achieved his immortal fame.

There was a like act of faith in the case of Magellan. He was the first man who sailed around the world, and proved that it was round by sailing round it. And on what did he base his belief? He had studied, as Columbus had, and read everything on the subject, as Columbus had; but there was another thing, you see, in his case. The churchmen told him he could never get round the world, the world was not round. He said, I have noticed in the case of an eclipse that, when the shadow of the earth is thrown on the moon, the shadow, so far as it reaches, is round. And he believed in the shadow. He was not absolutely certain of it, but he had a reasonable ground for his faith; and he sailed, and demonstrated its reason.

One other scientific illustration. It was observed by astronomers a few years ago that the outermost planet of our system was moving in a curious and eccentric way. No one could account for it. Then one astronomer said, If there is another planet that has not been discovered yet out beyond the one that we call the outermost, and if it is in a certain location and is of a certain size and mass, why that would account for these movements; and he sent word to an observatory on a certain night at a certain hour to level their telescope at a certain point. And there moved across the face of the glass the new planet whose existence had now become known. There was scientific faith. He was not certain,— he did not know that something would be found,— but he had faith in the uniformity of the laws of nature; that is, faith in the fact that God will keep his word, and that what he says by natural law and natural fact he means and will verify.

Faith, then, you see, plays its part in every department of life,— in achievement, in invention, in discovery, in everything that we can possibly make of the development of our characters. In ourselves we must believe in accomplishment;

in reform we must believe in the possibility of making the world better. It plays its part in religion; for it is by faith that we work out that which we mean, when we speak of it rationally, as the salvation of our souls.

I do not know to what great and high things I may come in the future; but I have faith in the infinite, endless evolution of that part of divinity which includes myself. And so I mean to work out with God my own salvation, knowing that it is he that worketh in me both to will and to do of his own good pleasure. And it is this faith that is our leader and guide to the uttermost reach of human growth on the earth. It is faith that looks forward to all the magnificent things that we believe can be accomplished by humanity here; and then, when we come to the border and look into the mist, I believe we shall prove that there is a life over yonder, the details of which are hidden from us. And though we do not know what kind of life it is over there, nor what isles of blessedness may await us, nor what palms grow and lift themselves into its finer airs, we believe as the boat pushes out from the shore that there is no possibility of sailing any sea where God is not. So we have faith in the possibilities, the grand possibilities, that wait us as we go out into that which at present, in its details, must remain for us the unknown.

Faith, then, grounded in reason, springing out of human experience, is our guide, our inspiration, our leader towards the highest and finest things that wait us in this life and in that which must follow.

Dear Father, we have faith in Thee, faith in ourselves as Thy children, faith in our brethren and sisters, also Thy children, faith in the inspirations and promises and uplooks that lead us to the final and better time to be; and we consecrate ourselves this morning to working out the things that this faith promises as possible. Amen.

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EDWARD A. HORTON.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

This little Catechism has grown out of the needs of my own work. Fathers and mothers have said to me, "Our children are constantly asking us questions that we cannot answer." Perfectly natural! Their reading and study have not been such as to make them familiar with the results of critical scholarship. The great modern revolution of thought is bewildering. This is an attempt to make the path of ascertained truth a little plainer.

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"ANTIPAS"

BY

Rev. ROBERT COLLYER

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"ANTIPAS."

"Antipas, my faithful martyr."— REV. ii. 13.

WE do not know *who* this man was, only *what* he was,— a martyr for God and his truth. While there is no word to tell us whether he was a young man or an old man, or had a wife and children, or lived his own lone life, or loved this fair world with the love of the morning tide, or had got a little tired of it all and was ready to go, and then whether he went brave and defiant to his death or shrank back when the great moment came, while the flesh cried, "Recant," and the spirit spurred him on. "Antipas, my faithful martyr,"— this is all they tell us about him. And even this seems to float over to us from the heart of the great divine mystery. I was in the spirit on the Lord's Day, the seer says, and fell on a vision and heard a voice, and saw as it were the Son of Man, and was bidden to write this word, "Antipas, my faithful martyr."

So this is the way the light flashes for us across the darkness. A man of no account, so far as anybody knows, puts his life in pawn for this faith which had made him a new man. And they will not hurt him, I presume, if he will hold his tongue about it, even now go with the crowd to the temple, toss a few grains of incense on the fire and crook his knee; but. if he persists in this fooling, they will have his life, for they have made up their minds to stamp this thing out, and then there is no way open to Antipas but to die. Again, he had no doubt dreamed, as they all did then, that he might see the heavens open, the hosts of angels sweep down through the azure vault with a great

shout, the dead rise from their graves, and the grand new day of God begin.

But there is no hope now that he will ever live to see that day; and so he dies, and they have seen the end of Antipas.

If they beheaded him, some pious souls might see to the funeral, weeping the while, collect the handful of ashes and hide them somewhere in a little urn, and then, it may be, scratch a dove or a cross on the cover; but, if they threw him to the wild beasts, there would be a speedier end. "There is an end, anyhow," they said, who saw him vanish on that dim forgotten day. "No more trouble about Antipas. He is blotted out."

"Yes, out of your books," the spirit says, "but not out of mine. I have not done with Antipas, my faithful martyr. I will touch his name with one gleam of immortal glory, and make it shine like a star when your names are forgotten. I want this man for a type. He shall stand for the instance of those who die for me and mine, and seem to be forgotten; but the world shall know through him that they are never forgotten. It is not an end they have made, but a beginning; and not the night which has touched them, but the great morning of God."

Such is the truth, as it touches me, about this line which stands for a life and a death; and I was drawn to it first for the truth it tells us: that those who stand steady and true to what they believe to be God's clear truth in this world, and their own clear duty, and die for it as they have lived, and prompt us to say as we watch them vanish, "How soon we are forgotten," are never forgotten. There may not be this one line, even, to tell us how they fought and fell; but this makes no matter. They have passed through a divine alchemy, which has transformed the carbon into a gem. Still, no greater mistake can be made, as we speak of such men, than that we make of thinking that your martyrs are only those who live and die for doctrines and

dogmas, though these be never so noble and true. Nor is it unfair to say a good many of those who, in any age, stand ready to die in such quarrels, would still be no true martyrs if you should put them to death. Some are simply bigots who, in the days that are gone, would just as easily put those to death who did not agree with them as they would die themselves, and always did this when they had the power. So I think these could not be martyrs in the high, sweet spirit of Antipas; while others, again, have stood ready to die or have died through a superb egotism or a devouring vanity rather than a quiet and sacred conviction of truth and duty, and gone posturing out of life, feeling that this was the way to immortal glory, and cheap at the price.

Nor can we doubt that, while there is still that in a true doctrine men may well die for, such doctrines did not mean to men like Antipas what they may easily mean to you and me. They were not an end, then, but a means, and did not settle these questions of the eternal life, but started them rather, and were not so much a specific for the cure of souls as a light on the way toward such a cure,— faith that it could be done, courage to denounce the shams and quackeries all about them, and heroism to fight them to the death. So in the work Antipas was called to do, the death he must die was but the close of the great heroic chapter; and a man like Paul would have been a martyr all the same if he had died in his bed.

We have to notice, also, that the spirit of the age will not allow a man to be put to death for his opinions any more, unless he tries to drive them home with lead and steel, so that even old John Brown was not a martyr so much as the last of the Ironsides, who fought on the stricken field, and then, when the battle went against him, slipped out of the body to God. And so it is not only true that a man may die for what he calls his faith, yet be no martyr, after all; but this is true also, that the old paths to the martyr's death by cross and stake are closed. And so it would be no use look-

ing for men to match Antipas, if this was the one way to martyrdom; but we know this is not the one way, nor are all the martyrs dead. While the terms on which they live and die are stern as ever, only they take other forms and work to other issues. While that which makes them and the stuff out of which they are made is here, and martyrs die every day unnoted, easily forgotten, steady as Milton's angels, true as the old saints, martyrs to truth and duty still, and to God and his Christ.

Shall I note some of these? Here is a man who is haunted all his life by some great invention or some supreme discovery in science or the arts a hundred years before the world is ready for it, or it can be born from the womb of time; and so he works for this, starves for it, and is a fool over it, in the world's common judgment, while still the thing fills him with its bitter-sweet torment, and so he has to die, not having received the promise, but seeing it afar off; and then, when he is dead, if he has any friends left, they draw a long breath and brighten up a little as they return from his funeral, and say: "Poor fellow, he might have done something very good in the world but for that maggot in his brain. He had splendid powers. What a pity he should throw them all away over such a delusion as that which haunted him!"

One such man I knew. He was haunted all his life by the idea of a grander and fairer social order, a new harmony among men, in which the conflict between class and class would come to an end, and we would all be brothers. He used to come to see me now and then and talk it over,— a man with a grand, craggy head, and far-looking deep gray eyes, the eyes of a prophet of the Lord, while it was so wonderful when he once struck his theme to see the lights play about him as from the better world he was nursing in his faithful old heart. But I used to say: "Old man, it is not practical: the world we live in is not ready for it. We shall have to wait until we get nearer the millennium."

Well, he had a small fortune he had got as a workingman and an inventor,— for he was both,— and, do what I would, I could not save him from investing the last dollar of it in his plan, just to make the demonstration, if he could do no more. It broke down. There was no help for this. Then he died of a broken heart, and went up to take his place by Antipas, the faithful martyr, and cry, "How long, O Lord, how long?"

Or it may be a man with a heavy burden and a weak back, a failing heart or brain and a sore battle, health for half a man and work for two, tired when he wakes with a hard day before him, but quiet through it all, and with no thought of giving in, only of dying at his post; and he dies of the battle and the burden, faithful unto death. Or your martyr, again, may be a woman, delicate and pure as they are in heaven, aspiring always, and always driven back. A woman earnest as Charlotte Brontë, self-forgetful as Mary Ware, brave as Lucretia Mott, yet hopeless in her fortune as Pucelle, the pure white maiden of France. Or she may be a wife and mother, borne down with heavy burdens, but bare of all sympathy or succor from the man who has brought them on her, and should clasp his arms about her now far more tenderly and surely than when he first won her love, her husband and the father of her children.

For what in the name of all that is most sacred in our life is that man good for who will load a woman down with the cares of a home and a family, and then let her fight the battle alone, while he is grumbling, as we used to say in Yorkshire, "like a bear with a sore head," shutting his heart, but not man enough to shut his mouth, watching her die daily before his eyes, a poor, sad, home-made martyr, and then marrying again before a twelvemonth, let us hope, to a vixen who will pay him back in his own coin?

Antipas, my faithful martyr, is here in the world, then, to-day, doing his work and dying when his time comes, with the light in his eyes, yes, or with a cloud in his eyes, as it

may please God, but faithful, all the same, unto death, Bearing the cross, but sure of the crown, or, what seems greater and grander still to me, bearing the cross, but not sure of the crown, and with never a thought that he is a martyr at all, yet entirely true to the last, and with no assurance of the waiting paradise in his poor, tired heart, only faithful unto death and to duty.

For this is where we touch the deeper pathos of these unknown and unnoted martyrs, that they are often of such small account in their own thought of themselves and of what they can do. The youth who would not bend before the great golden God, it may be in this town, but went into the fire all the same and did burn. The Noah whose name has not floated across the wreck of a nameless deluge, but who had a boat, and, when the waters were out, filled her so full that she sank with all aboard, while he himself went down into the seething floods with them, and with as calm a heart as he ever had who floated safely to the crest of Ararat. The man who lay all his life by the pool of healing, but was never helped in, and never made whole, yet who was just as patient and hopeful on the last day as on the first. The Paul who was not sure he had fought a good fight, but died fighting. The John who was also on Patmos, some sort of lone Patmos somewhere in this world, for the faith that was in him, yet never saw the open heaven and the city of God.

Antipas,— I knew him more than half a century ago. He had it in him, my Antipas, to sing psalms as sweet as "The Lord is my Shepherd" and to slay giants as big as Goliath of Gath; but he died almost before he could begin, yet never for a moment lamenting his early doom and his broken hope, and I closed his eyes and stood by his grave a few months ago.

Antipas,— he was a minister who went West into Illinois about 1831 as a missionary, and was true as Daniel; but he had no visions to keep him in heart that he could tell you

of. He grew old in his wanderings, and the people did not care to hear him; but still the burden lay on him to preach the word in season and out of season. And then one night, as he wandered over the vast lone prairies in the winter, the wolves came howling after him; and he was no more seen of men.

Antipas,— long ago he used to come into the western settlements of Pennsylvania, in cider time, load himself with apple-pips and start westward again, no man knew where or on what errand. But, when the tides of emigration swept over the Ohio, westward toward the great green lands, they found sunny spots by brooks and springs where there were little orchards of seedling apples fighting the wilderness; and half a century ago you could still find mossy patriarchs of that old man's planting, who was a crank to the white man and a medicine man to the Indians, God's angel of the covenant, clad in skins.

He saw the trend and the drift of the coming manhood, and the new homes, and gave his life for these; but no man knows where or when he died or how he went to see what they had to say about it who keep the accounts, when his work on the earth was done, the beautiful holy work.

Antipas! Antipas was a woman who had an infirmity fifty years, and spent all she had, also, on the doctors, and then died of her disease after raising two small children, who were no more to her, save for her loving and yearning old heart, than they were to you or me.

They were born in sin, the mother died, then my Antipas, the dear old saint, mothered them,— that was all,— and maintained them by working at a mangle. I mind how in my youth I rushed into her cellar one day when I went over to see my mother,— for we had worked together in the factory some years before, so I always went to see her in her cellar,— and there she was kneeling with those two little children, saying her grace before meat, while her "meat" was some dry bread and something you would call tea if you should

make believe very much, indeed, and that was all. But, when she was through, she rose, and whispered: "I was only saying my grace with the bairns, my lad. They will have a hard time when I leave them, for I shall have to go soon; and I want to teach them to be thankful, poor things, and myself, too, for I have a great deal to thank God for."

Antipas,— he was a rough soldier in an English regiment when they took him prisoner, the heathen men, and told him he might live if he would make obeisance before their chief. But he said, "Nāāy," the long-drawn Saxon nāāy, "I'se an Englishman. I weean't do nowt like that, and shame my sōōart. I can die, but I cannot do that." And so he died.

"Fair Kentish hop fields round him seemed,
Like dreams, to come and go.
Bright leagues of cherry blossom seemed
One living sheet of snow.
The smoke above his father's door
In low soft eddyings hung.
And must he watch it rise no more,
Doomed by himself, so young?"

There was but one way out of the trouble: he must not shame them there in the small cottage thousands of miles away. He must be a man, this poor fellow who never dreamed he was Antipas.

Now some lives pay their way close and clean to the end. Mine does, I know, so that, if the high Powers should say, "We have nothing else for you here or hereafter," I think I should answer: "I make no claim. I would love to see those I have lost once more in the blessed heavens; but, if it is not to be so, I am still debtor for the untold blessing of my many years." So must many feel who have had such an even and happy lot as mine has been, and yours. We are no martyrs, or, indeed, we may not be of the stuff of which martyrs are made; and so it may be the dear God and Father of us all chooses His men as a wise smith chooses his steel, mindful of the instrument he wants to make and use.

I do not try to guess the divine reason for giving me the sunny side of the way. I only know it is so, and that He who rules in heaven has made no martyr of me or put it in my way to be one, or, it may be, in yours; but what hosts there are who have never had our health or strength or any gift at all, except this of Antipas in the old days,— a steady courage to be faithful unto slaying, martyrs for God!

And these, again, I think of most tenderly look for no reward in the blessed world to come, as I said. They are only eager to be true to their trust down here, and then die. They may see others of whom they are ready to say, as we say of them, "There must be an Eternal Love which will find these out finally, and give them their reward."

It is never of themselves they think; and yet that loving instinct which would insist on a blessed outlook for these others, which would make the odds even,— is not this the instinct pointing toward a divine life in which they will all be partakers of this great glory which flashes for a single moment, and in a single line out of heaven, as it were, and shows us Antipas among the shining ones, disappearing here, but appearing there, forgotten on this side, but immortal on that, here a handful of dust, there the very instance of that which can never die, departing with a moan, but springing into life again with a psalm of victory? And what I love better still to believe is this: that the dear God our Father will not let such men and women wait for the life to come, after all, before they know in some dim sweet fashion what a glory rests on their unknown and unnoted life. Many a happy moment Antipas must have had before he went to the arena or the block, because this is what they all tell us whose experience is one with these obscure martyrs of every age.

The great hope of the seeker who never finds his treasure in science or the arts only, the great hope through which he trembles in expectation like a bird burdened with a carol on the bough in the spring; the euthanasia which steals over the

martyr to duty at shy moments and lights the pale face with a shining which is not of the sun; the near touch of heaven I felt in the presence of that poor old woman kneeling beside her mangle and asking a blessing on the crust and the thin ghost of the tea,— this is what my Antipas has for his bounty as he goes marching or stumbling to his unrecorded death.

The great, deep sea bearing up the poor little craft which is driving through the storm to the eternal rest and peace, — indeed, the story can never be told of these gleams, but this is what they mean.

They tell the discoverer, who still cannot quite discover, how surely the thing is there all the time, waiting to be revealed; and he knows it is all right, though he may never get at the rights of it the longest day he lives.

They touch fainting men and women in their weakness and pain as the angel touched the prophet, and give them the heaven-baken bread on the strength of which they go, also, their forty days in the wilderness, and are the proof, before letters, of the coming of the Lord, while the waiting heavens seem but a waste and "a space thick sown with alienated stars."

I treasure a little woodcut by Millais of a woman standing within the clutch of the incoming tide. She is bound there, and the waters are rising about her. There is no hope for her, she is doomed, and must die. But her face is turned upward by just a thought, as we should say; and her eyes shine with a great sweet light.

It does not occur to you, as you look at her, that she feels the waters creeping up about her, because her heart is in heaven; and under the picture you read these lines: —

> "Murdered for owning Christ Supreme,
> Head of His Church,— and no more crime
> But for not owning prelacy
> And not abjuring presbytery.
> Within the sea, tied to a stake,
> She suffered for Christ Jesus' sake."

That picture tells me the story I want to learn and need to learn about Antipas, my faithful martyr. The flames do not gather upon them or the waters devour them, after all, because God sees to it by a divine masterhood: and Death is lost in victory.

So my thought points toward a few simple lessons, and this is the first. We are not to think these martyrdoms came to an end when the world we live in came to the conclusion that

> "If a man's belief be bad,
> It will not be improved by burning."

Men and women die martyrs now as they died in the old bad days. It is not in the old brutal way, but it is just as painful; and martyrdom goes on in obscure corners still, where a great truth or a great reform which will win the world to a better life some day in the long day of God you find my Antipas.

Where great discoveries, that hold in their heart a vast benediction to man, haunt those who cannot but work at them until they drop in their tracks, in homes the law cannot touch, in cellars and garrets where forlorn men and women would any day welcome death as a grand and blessed boon, but keep up their hearts and face their duty cheerfully. Some of them are as sure of heaven as if they were there. Some are rough, homespun men of the earth, earthy, until the great moment comes; and then they jam the wheel and run the boat ashore to save the passengers, dropping, when that is done, a burnt ember.

Keep their hand on the lever and mind the train, but are crushed in the deed out of all semblance of a man; leap into the furnace of a burning home after a woman or a little child, and come out no more.

All martyrs, and all martyrs for God in duty and in a simple manhood, gathering their whole power into one spring for this and landing in the everlasting life, while they leave

us to our disputes about who shall be saved, and becoming themselves the instance in such supreme self-sacrifice, heedless of what we may say about their doom; leaving all this to take care of itself, but, then, doing more to enlarge and sweeten our ideas of God's saving grace in such noble saving, perhaps, than all our preaching.

And this is the second lesson: that those of us who have some chance at helping, or may have, by reason of our better fortune and lot, shall do what we can for these obscure and unnamed martyrs. It may not be much we can do; but we can all do something, if it is only to say to them: "This is my fight, too, and I am with you in your forlorn hope, in your sad lot, in your pioneering. You have my sympathy. I am your friend, and there is my hand."

There can never be more than a handful in such a case, never more than the twelve; but, then, what a grand thing it is to count for one in the twelve, even if it be but the doubting Thomas, the least of them all!

We can help those, it may be, who would fain hide some noble thought in the world's life, but cannot find the way to do it, or who bear heavy burdens on weak backs, or who, within the husk of a rough and, it may be, an evil life, still hold this kernel of nobility. While we may sing our psalms and say our prayers, be proud of our churches and think our ministers are the very flower of the flock, but, if we do not keep our hearts open and warm toward these obscure martyrs, we are not of His heart by whose name we are called.

Do I speak to those, finally, who, as life opens and duty begins to grow clear, will find it is hard and trying work to stand and fight for the outcast truth, for the unpopular reform, for anything that comes within the scope of my thought? Take heart, and go right on when that time comes.

You may be troubled, do not be distressed; perplexed, you must not despair; persecuted, do not even imagine you are forsaken; cast down, you cannot be destroyed.

In the old monastic gardens which have lain to the wilderness these three hundred years, when they dig down deep and turn up the soil, flowers spring and bloom again which have been buried ever since the harrying of the monks; and so shall your sowing be.

You will think no man cares, well, then, God cares; that you can do no one thing worth a moment's memory, so, it may be, thought Antipas, my faithful martyr.

So thought my poor old friend, kneeling in her cellar; but I told that story many years after to a great congregation in a church in her own town, and a little host of them flocked about me after the service, and said, "Yes, we mind old Nelly, too, and her wonderful, gentle heart"; and I found, as we talked of her, that she was preaching better sermons after she was dead all those years than most of us preach who are living.

Or you may think this may end it all. You were never more mistaken. The great, full tides will bear up your bark, never fear. Or the tempter may tell you how you will have twice as good a time if you will only give up half your manhood. The tempter lies. "It's dogged as does it," the poor day laborer says to the parson in the story, when he finds him quite broken down; and it may be this will be all you can do, and all Antipas could do that day. Well, then, I will pray, O God, make me as noble in my doing as some dogs I know of are in theirs, and I will win the day by sheer doggedness; but I will win the day.

Life Beyond Death

Being a Review of the World's Beliefs on the Subject, a Consideration of Present Conditions of Thought and Feeling, leading to the Question as to whether it can be demonstrated as a Fact.

To which is added an Appendix containing Some Hints as to Personal Experiences and Opinions.

By MINOT J. SAVAGE, D.D.

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After a review of the beliefs held in the past concerning life beyond death, Dr. Savage takes up the present conditions of belief, and considers the agnostic reaction from the extreme "other-worldliness" which it replaced, which was in turn followed by the spiritualistic reaction against agnosticism. He points out the doubts concerning the doctrine of immortality held by the churches and the weakness of the traditional creeds and the loosening of their hold upon people. He then considers the probabilities of a future life,—probabilities which, as he admits, fall short of demonstration. The volume includes a consideration of the work of the Society for Psychical Research and also an appendix giving some of the author's own personal experiences in this line. Dr. Savage holds, as a provisional hypothesis, that continued existence is demonstrated, and that there have been at least some well-authenticated communications from persons in the other life. The chief contents of the volume are as follows:

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BY

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PATIENCE.

"Let patience have her perfect work."— JAMES i. 4.

THIS apostle, in speaking of patience, intimates that it is not a belonging, but a being,— a spirit separate, in some manner, from the human spirit, as the angels are,— trying to do something for us, but only able as we will give it free course. So that his charge to his fellow-Christians all the world over, to let patience have her perfect work, is not so much that we shall do something as that we shall let something be done for us. All the help required of us toward patience, is not to hinder her working. Then she will do all that is needed, in her own time and in her own way; and we shall be perfect and entire, lacking nothing. So that, when a man or woman says, "I will have patience," they speak closer to the truth than when they say, "I will be patient." To say, "I will be patient," has a touch of assumption in it: to say, "I will have patience," denotes humility. The one word means, I will be what I will: the other, I will be what God will help me be. It is as if one man said, "I will be learned"; and another said, "I will have learning." And a very brief reflection will enable us to see that the apostle is borne out in this happy distinction by the grace and nature of things as we see them all about us. Patience is not there, to begin with. It is no inborn grace, like love. It comes to us by and by, and tries to find room in our nature, and to stay and bless us, and so make us altogether its own.

The first thing we are aware of in any healthy and hearty child is the total absence and destitution of this spirit of patience. No trace of it is to be discovered in the eager,

hungry outcries and the aimless but headstrong struggles against things as they are and must be, but that never would be for another moment if these young lords and kings of impatience could have their way. But presently patience comes, and rests on the mother's lifted finger as she shakes it at the tiny rebel, and puts a tone he has never heard before within the tender trills of her voice; and he looks up with a dim sort of wonder, as if he would say, "What is that?" But if the spirit be really and truly with the mother, it goes then to the child, and sheds upon him the dew of its blessing.

Then, in a few years, she looks at him out of the face of the old kitchen clock. It seems impossible that this steady-going machine should be so impassive, and persist in that resistless march; should not be quick to strike the hour he would drag before its time out of the strong heavens, or should not delay a little as he sits in the circle when the day is done, and dreads the exodus, at the stroke of eight, to his chamber. Poor little man! he has got into the old sorrow. It is not the clock, but the sun and stars he would alter, and the eternal ways.

Then, as the child passes into the boy, he has still to find this angel of patience. It is then very common for him to transfer his revolt from the sun to the seasons. If he is in the country, he rebels at the slow, steady growth of things. They never begin to come up to his demand. It is with all boys as it was with John Sterling. His father gave him a garden bed, to till as he would; and he put in potatoes. They did not appear when he thought they should. So he dug them out, and put in something else. And so he kept on digging in and out all one summer, because the things sprouted and bloomed at once in his hot little heart, like Jonah's gourd. It was an instance of the whole boy life. Nature can never come up to his notion of what she ought to do until patience comes to help him. She shows him at last that the seasons must have their time; and he must

bring his mind and action into accord with the everlasting order, for without that he can do nothing.

But every boy, of any quick, strong quality, struggles with things as they are and must be,— wants to alter them to suit himself. It seems as if he had brought the instinct, but lost the memory, of a world and life that were just what he wanted; and he cannot give it up until this angel comes and helps him conform to his new condition, and he only minds her at last when he feels he must. The only children in whom she has her perfect work are those small martyrs that begin to suffer as soon as they begin to live, and are never released from their pain until God takes them to his breast in heaven. There is no such patience besides as they show, as there is no such pity besides as they win.

But your big, healthy boy fights it out, hard and long. Nothing is just as he wants it. Christmas comes like a cripple, and school, when the holidays are over, like a deer. It is a shame cherries and apples will not ripen sooner, and figures find their places more tractably, and geographies run as straight as a line. He knows no such felicity besides as to run to a fire or after a ball, or to burn fireworks or scamper away on a horse. The reason is just that which we always give as we watch him, when we say, "Now he is in his element." He is striking out like a strong swimmer on a splendid tide of impatience. He hears the mighty waters rolling evermore, and deep calleth unto deep in his heart.

It is easy to see, again, that these habits of the child and boy are only the germs of a larger impatience in the youth and the prime. We soon get our lesson from the angel about the kitchen clock, and the courses of the sun, and the limits of our power to make this world turn the other way. We learn to come to time, and set ourselves to its steady dictation in all common things; and patience so far has her perfect work.

I wonder to see the patience of some children at last

about what they know they have got to do and be in their tasks and strivings. I see small girls of ten who might well shame big men of forty as they buckle to their lessons and go steadily through them; and even boys are sometimes almost admirable, though the angel of Patience must always feel about boys, I think, as that man in New York must feel, who keeps in the same cage the cat and the canary, and the mouse and the owl, with half a dozen more of the sharpest antagonisms of nature. Patience must feel about boys as that man feels about his animals,—that, after all his pains, there is no telling what they may do at any moment.

But if the boy does learn all that he ought to learn about times and seasons, and task and treats, and lines and limits, it is very seldom that the lesson holds good as he begins the march to his manhood or when he gets there. Patience, then, has to teach him deeper things. Time still says one thing and his desire another, and he hungers again for what God has forbidden in the very condition of his life. But now it is unspeakably more serious than it was ten years ago, as she comes to him and tries to teach him her great lesson.

She has to remember what myriads of young men, strong and eager and headstrong as he is, have broken away from her, after all, like the impatient prodigal in the Gospels, and have only come back and listened to her word when they had run through their whole possessions, and had to be patient under pain and loss, when they might have rejoiced with exceeding joy over powers incorruptible, undefiled, and of a perennial strength and grace.

Fortune and position, weight for weight, with what faculty the Maker has given him, is just as sure to come to a man in this country as the crop to the farmer and the web to the weaver, if he will only let this angel have her perfect work. The bee does not more surely lay up her honey, or the squirrel his nuts in store, enough to last until May brings

the new bloom and the tender shoots break forth in the woods, than a man, with the same temperate and enduring patience, can lay up life enough, and all life needs, to last him from the time when the frost seals his faculties to the new spring that waits where the Lord is the Sun. But what multitudes want to do is to trust themselves to some short cut across the dominion of the sworn enemy of this angel.

Travellers in India tell us they have seen a magician make an orange-tree spring, and bloom, and bear fruit, all in half an hour. That is the way many believe fortune ought to come. They cannot wait for its patient, steady, seasonable growth: that is all too slow, as the time-piece and garden bed are to the child. They must put the time-piece forward, and that will bring thanksgiving, and gather their crop when they sow their seed. Patience comes and whispers: "It will never do: the perfect work is only that done by my spirit. The magician can never bring his thirty-minute oranges to market, because they can never nourish anybody as those do that come in the old divine fashion, by the patient sun and seasons." He gives no heed to the wise, sweet counsels, takes his own way, and then, if he wins, finds that somehow he has lost in the winning: the possession is not half so good as the expectation; but the rule is that the man who will not let patience have her perfect work in building up his position and fortune ends bare of both, and has nothing but a harvest of barren regrets.

No man, again, comes to middle age without finding that this is the truth about all the noble sensations that give such a color and grace to our life, and are such loyal ministrants to its blessing, if we can say, "No," to the enemies of our good angel when they come and counsel us to disregard her ways, to let our passions take the bit in their teeth, and go tearing where they will.

Twenty years ago last June, when I had been a few weeks in this country, I tasted, for the first time in my life, an exquisite summer luxury; and it seemed so good that I thought

I could never get enough of it. I got some more, and then some more; and then I found, for the first time, I think, what it is to have too much of a good thing. I ate, that day, of the tree of knowledge of good and evil; and now I care nothing for that good thing any more when I taste it. The angel is there with his flaming sword, insisting that I shall only eat of it out of Eden. It has been to me ever since a parable of this deep old verity. I disregarded the angel whispering: "You had better take care. If you eat that for a steady diet through a whole June day, you do it in spite of me. The hunger for some more, which has been growing all your life, is a pledge that the good of this will abide with you as long as you live if you will always let hunger wait on appetite." I had no idea of doing that. Impatience got the rein, and I gathered and ate the whole harvest of that good thing between dawn and dark. I mention this, because it is one of those experiences we all buy at a great price by the time we are forty, and then offer to give them away to young friends of twenty, but can seldom find anybody who wants them. In our youth, it is our misfortune, in a great many of these ways, to refuse to let patience have her perfect work, and then rue it as long as we live.

Every glass of wine or dram of whiskey drunk by a healthy and strong young man is an insult and injury to this good angel, and makes it so far impossible for her to do her perfect work, because he is spending ahead of his income of life, and bringing a fine power of being to beggary, if not to worse than that. He can only get that glow and flame at a heavy discount, both of life itself and of all that makes life worth living. Patience would help him to infinitely finer pleasures from her simple and wholesome stores, and they would stay with him as long as he lived; but he will not listen to her counsels, and will have none of her reproofs. Therefore, will she weep at his calamities, and mock when his dole cometh.

This is but one way in which we can make this vast mistake, through our impatience and desire to forestall the good God will give us in his long, steady, seasonal fashion. There is a whole world of evils of very much the same sort, some more fatal still than the one I have named. It is the same thing, whichever way we turn. Nature says one thing and desire another. Only the perfect work of patience can make both one, and then the result of both is grace. She comes to you, young men, as she came to us when we were young. Some of you will put your life into her hands as some of us did whose hair is gray, and she will lead you forth into peace and joy. Some will refuse, and go for a short life, and a merry one; and they will get the brevity, but miss the mirth, and be dead at forty, though for twenty or thirty years after they may still remain unburied. Byron was a dead carcass long before he went out to the Greeks.

All this, in all these ways, as it comes to us from our infancy to our prime, is only the outward and visible part of a patience — or want of it — that touches the whole deeper life of the heart and soul, and makes the most awful or the most celestial difference to our whole being.

This is true, first, of our relation to one another. The very last thing most of us can learn of our relations to each other is to let patience have her perfect work. Very few fathers and mothers learn the secret this angel is waiting to tell them about their children until, perhaps, the last is born. It is probable that he will give more trouble than any one of the others. If his own bent is not that way, the big margin he gets — when we are aware this is really the Benjamin — is likely to make that all right. We bear with him as we never bore with the first. Then love and duty were the motive powers: now it is love and patience. We would fain undo something now we have done to the elder ones, and the young rogue reaps all that advantage; and then the angel, by this time, has had her way, if Solomon, with his wicked axiom about sparing the rod and spoiling

the child, has no more weight with us than he ought to have. She has shown us what power and grace are under the shadow of her wings, and how in each of these little ones we have another life to deal with that is only to be fairly brought out to its brave, strong beauty as the season brings out the apples and corn. Patience is the only angel that can work with love.

To refuse her blessing is to refuse God's holiest gift, after what he has given us in the child's own being. I think the day is yet to dawn when fathers and mothers will feel that they would rather scourge themselves, as the old anchorites did, than scourge their little ones, and will not doubt that they, and not the child, deserve it, when they feel like doing it. I suppose there is not an instance to be found of a family of children coming up under an unflinching and unfailing patience and love turning out badly. The angel prevailing with us prevails with the child for us, and turns our grace to its goodness. The fruit ripens at last all right, if we have the grace to let the sun shine on it and to guard it from the destroyer. All the tendencies of our time to give children the right to have a great deal of their own way are good tendencies, if we will understand that their own way is of course the right way, as certainly as a climbing vine follows the turn of the sun. All we have to do is carefully and patiently to open the right way for them wherever they turn.

Patience, again, must have her perfect work in our whole relation to our fellow-men. It is very sad to read of the shameful things that have been done in the name of Religion, for the sake of conformity,— how the fagot has burned and the rack has wrung. We cannot believe that we could ever do that, and very likely we never should; yet we are, most of us, inquisitors in our way, and want to force human beings into conformity with the idea we have of fitness, though it may not be theirs at all.

It is reported that the flitch of bacon at Dunmore, in

Essex, is hardly ever claimed. It is a noble piece of meat, you know, always ready, with ribbons for decorations, and no little rustic honor besides, for the man and woman that have been married a year, and can say solemnly that their life, the whole twelvemonth, has been a perfect accord.

Only once in many years is it claimed, though to many an Essex peasant it must look very tempting. The loss lies in the fact that they did not take this angel with them, and make her the equal of love. They imagine that love is omnipotent, and can guard them from that sharp word. Love very often leads them on to it, since love, they know, is justified of love; but, when all hope of the flitch is lost, if they are true and good, the angel comes and stays, and has her way. If they are neither, it is brute and victim, with no hope of even the questionable mercy that comes here through the divorce court.

Want of patience, indeed, apart from the vilest reasons, must be the main cause for the dreadful rank growth of this evil weed of divorce in our social life. There are, no doubt, instances in which to be divorced is the most sacred thing men and women can do. Many a woman must do this to save her life. She is tied to a beast that will crush her to death, and that is her escape. And many a man must do it, to save his soul. It was a woman he thought he was wedding: he finds the old Greek fable, of something with a fair woman's face, but not a woman, was true; and she would drag him down to her den if he could not get free.

But these are, on both sides, the rather rare exceptions. Trace the most of these sad things to the well-head, and it is want of patience, each with the other, that has made all the mischief; and what each will call, in their blind fury, an infernal temper, is this devil of impatience, which has taken the place of the good angel who would have saved them if they had welcomed her as they ought, and let her have her way. If they did love each other once, they will never find

such blessing as could come to them, with patience as the aid to their affections. Human souls have an imperial quality in them,— a turn for insisting on being master; and when they come so close together as husband and wife, and love recovers his sight, as he will, patience must take up her part, and adjust the thing by a constitution of equal rights, and by an equal giving up of rights, or, in spite of love, there will come infinite trouble.

We have very much the same thing to learn in our relation to each other in the whole length and breadth of our life: ministers with their people, and people with their ministers; employers with their servants, and servants with their employers; men in their dealings with men, and women in their judgments of women. We would all be very much more careful in what we say and do if, when we pray, we should say, "Our Father, give us grace to let thine angel have her perfect work, to guide and keep us till we reach the line at which forbearance ceases to be a virtue, and then, if the storm must come, make it like the lightning that cuts its quick way through the clogged and dead atmosphere, only to restore and bless, to set all the birds singing a new song and deck the world with a new beauty,"— that would be a blessed prayer.

For, finally, there must be a divine impatience, too. Jesus Christ felt it now and then; but you have to notice that it is never with weakness or incompleteness, or even folly or sin. For all these he had only forbearance and forgiveness and pity and sympathy. What roused him, and made his heart throb and his face glow and his voice quiver with a divine indignation, was the hollow pretence and ugly hypocrisy he had to encounter, and the judgments one man made of another out of his from a sense of superior attainment. That is our right, as much as it was his right, as we grow toward his great estate. I have seen an impatience as divine as ever patience can be; but this is needed only now and then, and can only come safely and truly to the soul in

which her great sister has her perfect work. The perfectly patient man is always justified in all his outbreaks. Nobody blames the flaming sword or the quick stroke home that comes from a noble forbearance, any more than we blame the thunderbolts of the Lord.

Last of all, for this angel of patience we must cry to heaven.

One of the old pagan kings would not let the sage go who came and told him that, when passion was like to be his master, he would do well, before he gave way, to recite to himself all the letters of the alphabet. The counsel seemed so admirable that the king cried, "I cannot do without you." It was only a dim pagan shadow of the sheen of the patient angel as the apostle sees her. There she sits, the bright, good servant of the Most High, ready to help all who cry to him,— the good servant that through untold ages wrought at this world to make it ready for our advent; laying together an atom at a time this wonderful and beautiful dwelling-place, with all these stores of blessing in mine and meadow, mountain and vale. Then, when her great charge came, she was waiting for him, to nurse and tend him, own sister of faith and hope and love, and twin sister of mercy; tireless, true, and self-forgetful, anxious only for her charge, and never to leave us, if we will let her have her perfect work, until through all hindrance she leads us through the golden gate, over which is written, "Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus." Then she will have her perfect work; and we shall be perfect and entire, lacking nothing.

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EDWARD A. HORTON.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

This little Catechism has grown out of the needs of my own work. Fathers and mothers have said to me, "Our children are constantly asking us questions that we cannot answer." Perfectly natural! Their reading and study have not been such as to make them familiar with the results of critical scholarship. The great modern revolution of thought is bewildering. This is an attempt to make the path of ascertained truth a little plainer.

This is the call for help in the home. Besides this, a similar call has come from the Sunday-school. Multitudes of teachers have little time to ransack libraries and study large works. This is an attempt, then, to help them, by putting in their hands, in brief compass, the principal things believed by Unitarians concerning the greatest subject.

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It is believed that this Catechism will be found adapted to any grade of scholars above the infant class, provided the teacher has some skill in the matter of interpretation.

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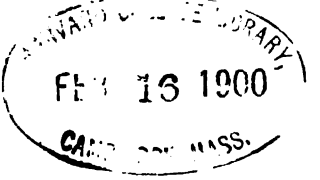

SOME LESSONS FROM THE LIFE OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

I TAKE one text from the New Testament and two from the writings of Lincoln himself. The first is from the First Epistle of John, the fourth chapter and the seventh verse,—"Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God and knoweth God." The second is from the second Inaugural Address, delivered March 4, 1865,—"With malice toward none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in." The third is from a private letter to his friend Speed,—"Die when I may, I want it said of me by those who know me best that I always plucked a thistle and planted a flower where I thought a flower would grow."

Such curious creatures of tradition are we that it would not surprise me if there were persons here this morning who should question the propriety of my taking a text from anything except some Biblical writing. As a matter of fact, the use of texts by Christian preachers is comparatively a modern custom. In the next place I do not know where any nobler words can be found in any Scripture, written in any nation or in any age in the history of all the world, than those which I have given you from Lincoln himself. Should I take the name of some person mentioned in the Bible as my subject, no one would question that it was a sermon I was to preach, no matter how little might be known of him, no matter though we knew a great deal and that great deal were disreputable,—it would be a sermon if the man's name happened to be mentioned in the

Bible. But perhaps there are persons here who will wonder whether it is not a lecture, or a secular address, because Lincoln happened to live since the writing of the Bible was completed. But, as I have said concerning the words, no finer can be read in any Scripture, so I say concerning Lincoln. Leaving one side the central character, the Nazarene, there is no man mentioned in the Bible, from the first verse of Genesis to the last of Revelation, who can be regarded as Lincoln's superior, either for greatness or for goodness. And, since God is ultimately the author of all Scripture and the Creator of all grand characters, may we not find a sermon in some one of his higher and finer, because later, creations? Let us then put aside all question or thought or criticism of this nature, and note some of the salient and instructive incidents in his career and the features of his character.

Since his death we have learned facts in regard to his origin, the blood that flowed in his veins, with which he himself was not familiar. It is sometimes said that a man is the product of inheritance and of environment. Undoubtedly, in some large and general way this is true; and yet we cannot carry out an idea like this in any minute fashion. A poet does not necessarily give birth to poets for children; and men born in the midst of poetical surroundings are not always distinguished for the possession of poetic gifts. Yet, in some large and general way, this is true.

What blood, then, flowed in the veins of Lincoln? He was English, and New England sifted through the South. From a Norfolk family in England we trace the stream to Salem, Hingham, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Virginia, Kentucky, Illinois. Sometimes the stream ran faint and feeble. Sometimes it was underground. Then, again, it came to the light. Sometimes it was muddy. Sometimes it was clear. But, at the last, it sprung up into a fountain of life and health and healing for the nation.

You are familiar with the schooling of Lincoln's poverty

during his childhood. I am no friend of poverty. If it be true that the poor we have always with us, I accept it as a fact, but count it a misfortune rather than a blessing. I have been too well acquainted with it myself to have any love for it. But we need to distinguish between the kind of poverty which Lincoln endured and that which marks the slums of our great cities,— that poverty which is close akin to deceit, to theft, to vice, to beggary, to evil of every kind. Lincoln knew nothing of poverty such as that. His was that healthy, outdoor poverty of the frontier, which struggles grimly, sometimes desperately, with adverse conditions, but which has health, at least, for a possibility in the physical veins, and does not carry with it the temptation to degrading vices, does not carry with it any taint of sycophancy, beggary, and degeneration of the moral nature. Lincoln was a poor boy, who struggled against every kind of obstacle, and educated himself only because he had in him a thirst for knowledge.

I wish to note, in passing, the kind of education which Lincoln attained. Was he educated in the true sense of that word? That depends entirely upon what we mean by it. If only college-bred men are educated, then, of course, he was not. If only men who can read Latin or speak French or German are educated, then of course, again, he was not. If only men familiar with the great literary and art treasures of the world are educated, then again, of course, he was not. If men only are educated who have been able to devote themselves to profound researches in philosophy and science, then again, of course, he was not. He was not educated in the sense of having been made a receptacle into which facts were poured. A man may be brimful, running over with facts and information of every kind, and still be a fool. This does not constitute education. A man is educated who is so trained in his perceptive faculties, in his analytical powers, so trained in all his abilities of one kind and another, that, put him down in the midst of difficult surroundings, he will be able to see where

he is, able to understand what the occasion calls for, be able to master his conditions instead of being overwhelmed by them. The man who can master himself and master his surroundings, wherever he may be, only give him a little time,— he is an educated man. And the man who is the victim of his conditions and surroundings, with no practical ability or power, may know ever so much, but he is not educated.

Lincoln was one of the most grandly educated men of his generation; and yet he was ignorant of the great majority of things that people foolishly suppose to be absolutely essential to education. As an illustration, perhaps I may be pardoned for telling an anecdote with which you may be familiar, which illustrates the point I have been trying to make.

It is said that a man was being sailed across a lake somewhere in the Old World by a boatman, and that this gentleman was a puffed-up and conceited scholar and literary man. He fell into conversation with the boatman, and said to him, "Have you ever studied philosophy?" And when the answer came, "No," he said, "Then a quarter of your life is lost." Then he said, "Did you ever study science?" And the answer being the same, he replied, "Then another quarter of it is lost." "Do you know anything about art?" "No." "Well, then, another quarter of your life is gone." Just then a squall struck the boat, and the boatman turned and said, "Sir, can you swim?" "No," came the answer. "Well, then," the boatman replied, "the whole of your life is lost."

The one thing of first importance is to be able to swim, and that art and science Lincoln had grandly mastered.

Let us note in passing — I wish only that you give a glimpse at it — how closely in touch he was with the common people, the common thought, the common life. He was one of the common people; and the circumstances of his life made the grocery store of a Western village the

centre of all political discussion, discussion of every kind that concerned the life of the people, and Lincoln, as the result of his natural powers and abilities, became the centre, leader, master, of these discussions. This was where all public questions were discussed and settled. Lincoln could tell the best and most pointed story, and could analyze the problems that came up, and help decide the great questions of the day better than any man in the midst of the surrounding country where he lived.

Now I wish to note the kind of character that he developed; and this seems native, to have sprung up as water springs from some hidden source under ground whose ultimate and far-away fountain is God. The honesty of his character, the simple fact that he was called "Honest Abe," singled him out as peculiarly and distinctly honest. He did not borrow what honesty he had from his neighbors. We know there were plenty of questionable and slippery characters in the midst of those that made up his neighborhood in his ordinary life; but there was this integrity in the man's character that made it utterly impossible for him to be anything but honest.

You remember that one little incident, characteristic of the man, just as a little chipping from a granite block will let you see the quality of the whole quarry. He had been postmaster at the little town of New Salem,— one of those small towns that flourished for a while and then went out of existence,— and, when the business of the office was wound up, it being very difficult in those days to communicate with Washington, Lincoln put away what was left of money that belonged to the government until it could be called for. Some years afterwards an agent of the post-office called for a settlement of the accounts. Lincoln not only gave him the accounts, but went to the bottom of a trunk and picked out an old stocking, and out of that stocking took the identical silver and copper coins which belonged to the government when he wound up his affairs, and, turning them over

to the agent, said,— what would make a revolution in the life of this country if everybody could say,— "I never use any money but my own."

I do not mean by this that a man has not a right to borrow money that is not his own; for, if he borrows it legitimately, it is his own for the time being. But, if the business of this country could be conducted in that fashion, the millennium that people dream of would be some millions of years nearer to us than it appears, so far as we can discern any signs of its coming.

Honest in his personal character, honest in his professional character. I am perfectly well aware that there are any number of good lawyers who claim, and honestly claim, that they have a perfect right to fight to attain anything for their clients that the law will permit them to attain, whether it is morally permissible or not. They say we did not make the laws. It is our business to help administer law in accordance with the statutes; and, if we can gain a point for our clients and gain it legally, it is honest and right for us to do it. There are large numbers of honest men in the legal profession who hold that theory of their position and work. There are others, however, who differ. I have a friend in a prominent position in Washington who studied law when he was a young man; and, when his professor told him that such things were permissible and practised commonly at the bar, he said, "Well, I won't be a lawyer." And he studied something else instead.

Lincoln's theory of law practice was different from this. He carried his idea of honesty into his profession to such an extent that the simple fact that he was ready to advocate any particular side was always proof to the jury that that side ought to win; for they knew that Lincoln was keen, that he could analyze, that he could discover the facts. And they said, We know he wouldn't take a case that he didn't believe was right. That was the way he practised law. As an illustration of it, it is said that one day Hern-

don, his law partner, in preparing a case, guessed at something, thought it might be true, and put it forward as one plea. Lincoln looked over the brief, and he said, "Herndon, do you know if that is so?" The answer was, "No," that he had guessed at it. Then Lincoln said: "Herndon, that comes pretty near being a sham; and a sham comes pretty near to being a lie. Don't let it go on the record. If you do, some day this cursed thing may come up and stare us in the face long after the case is settled." That is the way he conducted his law cases.

There were two young men, children of an old friend of his, whom another lawyer had led into sharp practices. They were trying to win a dishonest case. Lincoln appeared on the other side, and pleaded with the jury to convict them for their own sake. He said, These boys are children of an old friend of mine, and I want to save them if I can; and I plead with you to convict them, to deliver them from the course of dishonesty on which they are entering, to help teach them the lesson that it won't pay.

In another case a man came to him, and said, "Lincoln, I wish you would prosecute this claim for me." Lincoln looked it over; and he said: "Yes, I think I could win it. I could get these few hundred dollars from the widow with her helpless children; but I think it probably belongs to her quite as much as to you. I could do it, but I won't; for there are some legal rights which are moral wrongs."

And, then, he did another thing which, I presume, would astonish most New York clients. He tried a case; and his law partner, Lamon it happened to be at that time, took a fee of $250, which he offered to share with Lincoln. It was a case for a poor young woman whose mind was weak, and who could not look after her own interests; and Lincoln said, "Lamon, I won't touch any half of any fee until you send half of that back: it is too large a fee for the services we have rendered." This was the quality of the man. Do you wonder that he came to be looked upon with universal and

unlimited trust by the common people, as they learned to know what manner of man he was?

It is not my business this morning to give you his biography, to tell you in detail the outlines of his career. I wish to pick up certain lessons which we may apply to ourselves day by day. Note the tenderness, the tender heartedness, the humanity of the great, strong, heroic soul,— tenderness that did not simply take in all mankind, but everything that could feel, that led him even to forget the dignity of his character and his actions if he could prevent pain. As an illustration, he was riding with some other lawyers on a certain occasion. They missed him from their company; and pretty soon he appeared, covered with mud from head to feet,— as he might easily do, as any of you will know who understand what those Western roads can be,— and they found he had got off of his horse for the sake of unmiring a pig which was sinking slowly down into suffocation. If any of you can find a nobler thing than that done by anybody anywhere, though it may not lend itself to heroic verse, I would like to hear the tale.

He was so tender-hearted in his dealings with those who had broken the laws of the land that, so far as I have been able to study his career, I have found only one case where he wilfully and purposely, and with apparent gladness, refused to pardon. I do not mean by this that he pardoned everybody; but he wanted to. He refused once to pardon a slave-trader. That is the only case I have ever discovered. He had very little sympathy with a man who could trade in his fellow-men. They used to find fault with him, as I well remember, because he was so lenient with those who were guilty of breaches of military discipline. He said on a certain occasion, writing to a friend, "It rests me, after a hard day's work, to hunt for and find some good reason for pardoning a poor fellow who is condemned to be shot; and I can go to bed happy, thinking how joyous I have made him and his family and his friends." This

great, all-embracing tenderness, tender as he who,— when hanging on the cross,— said, "Father, forgive them: they know not what they do!"

I wish to note, in passing,— though this is no necessary part of my theme,—the greatness of Lincoln. And let me say here, as springing out of that thought, that the nation is blessed that has great men; and these great men are not always to be envied on account of the supposed happiness which they enjoy. I believe it is rather true that the greatest souls of the world have been burdened, sad, tragic souls,— lonely, like some mountain summits, cold in their isolation; but, like mountain summits, they are the sources of the streams that trickle down their sides to fertilize and beautify the valleys and to bear up on their bosoms the commerce of the world.

It is sometimes said that we must imitate God. No, friends, just in so far as God is pictured to us as being unhuman, or super-human, unlike man, just so far is it impossible for us to imitate him. We can only imitate human qualities; and here is one objection that I have to the lifting of Jesus out of the range of our human sympathies. It is only as he was a man that we can tread in his steps, that we can find in him inspiration and uplift towards noble and grand things.

I have been asked a great many times, if evolution is true, why it is that the great men, so many of them, were in the past. Why do we not have the greatest men now, if the world is growing and lifting and rising all the time? If this were the place, I could go into a wide and elaborate discussion of that subject. I can touch now on only one thought concerning it. I think that the popular impression that the great men are in the past springs out of an entire misconception of the past, and our tendency always to idealize that which is a good ways off. For example, we talk about Plato, Aristotle, the great philosophers of the olden time. There is not a philosopher in all the past history of

the world who, for grasp and breadth of mind, for information, for analytical, for constructive power, can be placed beside Herbert Spencer. Aristotle and Plato, as thinkers, were not his equals. So it is not true that the great men were all in the past.

This leads me to say of Lincoln that I do not know of any man in the past history of the world that I believe will be estimated in the future as being greater than he,— great not only in these moral qualities, but great in intellectual grasp and power. Those who have studied the inside history of the nation during the time that he was at the head of affairs know that it was he more than everybody else that saved the nation. It was one of the most fortunate things that ever happened in this country that Seward, for example, had made himself so unpopular in Pennsylvania that the political managers felt he could not carry that State in the election, and so did not dare to nominate him. This was the turning-point in the history of Lincoln. This country would have been ruined in a year if any one other than Lincoln had been in his place. He mastered the strategies of the battlefield as well as did the soldiers; and he had the instinct for selecting the best men and putting them in the right place and keeping them there. People say Grant saved the nation; but Lincoln saved Grant. Grant would have been turned out of his position over and over again but for Lincoln. He said, "I can't spare that man: he fights." And you remember the familiar story of how, when they told him of Grant's drinking, Lincoln replied, "I wish I could find the kind of liquor he drinks, so that I could give it to my other generals."

It was Lincoln, then, Lincoln's intellectual power as well as his moral power, that saved the nation in our great crisis.

I want to touch for a moment on that other quality of Lincoln's character that is always associated with him in our memory, his keen sense of humor. This is not the

place nor is this the hour for me to give you illustrations of it. I simply note it as being one of the great and most important, as I believe, constituents in his character. In the first place, it is a saving quality in any man. The man who can smile at his own discomforts, at disasters that come to himself, is safe. The man who can relieve the great tension of bearing public burdens is safe. Lincoln used to speak of this, or his friends used to speak of it for him, as his safety-valve; and, when some found fault with him for indulging in it on what seemed unfitting occasions, he said wearily, "If I could not laugh, I should die." Lincoln's humor, his laughter, his mirth, was only the spray on the crest of white caps that rolled over the fathomless deeps where were caverns and mysteries that reached down to the heart of the world. Lincoln was blessed by this power of humor, which helped him bear himself bravely and find relief in the midst of the great stress and burden of his public affairs.

A personal friend of mine tells me of meeting him one night, or rather morning, in the grounds of the White House. He told the story so graphically that, if I could reproduce it, you would see him as I did and as my friend saw him. It seemed to be typical of his character. This friend was spending the night in Washington, and it was very warm in the summer; and he got up, being not far away from the White House, and thought he would stroll through the grounds. It was between two and three o'clock in the morning. He was walking leisurely along one of the paths when he saw a strange figure coming. He stopped a moment, and knew it was the President. He had on a dressing-gown and indoor cap and his slippers, and was walking wearily along, his head bowed. My friend stood one side, and watched that marred face; watched that patient head, as though of an Atlas supporting a world; watched him in the darkness pacing up and down like a shepherd while his people slept, thinking about some great, perplexing problem

of peace or war, with head bowed, until he said the agony of his look was burned into his consciousness so that he should never be able to forget it as long as he lived. So he bore our burdens, carried our sorrows, for our sakes was smitten; and with his stripes we have been healed.

I come now to touch on his religious character, to raise first the question as to whether he had a religious character; for, friends, I propose to do this morning a thing I do not often do. It would help clear the air if people would rise and open their eyes and face facts a little now and then. Was Lincoln a religious man? If we are to judge by the standards asserted and reasserted every day in the year by the Vatican, judged from the point of view of the great Roman Catholic Church, Lincoln was not a Christian or a religious man; and to-day he is tasting the cup of torment pressed to the lips of the lost. If the teaching of the infallible Church is true, Lincoln has never been saved and never can be saved. Judged by the standards of the Anglican Church and the Episcopal Church of this country, Lincoln is lost; and there is no hope for him in any period of the future. Measured by the standards of the Presbyterian Confession of Faith, which is being published still all over Europe and America, Lincoln is lost. He never complied with one single condition of the Presbyterian Church for being saved. Judged by the standards of the great Methodist churches of England and America, Lincoln is lost. Judged by the standards of the great Baptist churches of Europe and America, Lincoln is lost. Judged by the standards of the Congregational churches as affirmed in their great National Council at Plymouth Rock a few years ago, Lincoln is lost.

I say it will do us good now and then to think a little straight and clear. If to say this shocks you, I am not responsible. I did not make the creeds. I am simply telling you what they are. If it seems to you incredible, unbelievable, too horrible to be true, to think that the great,

gentle, magnanimous, loving, tender, helpful man, he who next, perhaps, to Jesus himself, is entitled to be called a Saviour,— if it seems too horrible for you to think of him as being lost, then do not any longer support the creeds that say so. Be honest and clear-headed enough to say on the street what you think in the privacy of your souls.

What was Lincoln's religious opinion and character? When he was a young man, he wrote a book which would have been called an infidel publication, which would be now if it were in existence. His friends got hold of it, and destroyed it, because they were afraid that it would ruin his political future. Undoubtedly it would have done it. Let me say, in passing, there is not an office in the gift of the American people that might not have been in the reach of Colonel Robert G. Ingersoll if he had been dishonest enough to conceal his opinions. If Lincoln's opinions had been known when he was a young man, they would have ruined his political future. Undoubtedly, he changed those opinions, and approached more nearly to common religious views as he grew older. I will read you an extract from Carpenter's "Six Months at the White House": —

"The conversation turned upon religious subjects, and Mr. Lincoln made this impressive remark: 'I have never united myself to any church, because I have found difficulty in giving my assent, without mental reservation, to the long, complicated statements of Christian doctrine which characterize their Articles of Belief and Confessions of Faith. When any church will inscribe over its altar, as its sole qualification for membership, the Saviour's condensed statement of the substance of both law and gospel, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and thy neighbor as thyself," that church will I join with all my heart and all my soul.'"

Perhaps some of you, although you are Unitarians, do not know that that is precisely the basis of organization of the

National Conference of Unitarian Churches. If Lincoln were alive now, that statement would make him one of our own people; for that is the platform on which we stand — love to God and love to man, as the essence of all true religion, the essence of the religion which Jesus preached and illustrated by his life. I do not mean to claim that, if Lincoln had lived, he would have ever joined a Unitarian church. But I do claim that his real place would have been either with the Universalists or with ourselves.

Lincoln, then, if we are to measure him by the standard of goodness, of devotion to his fellow-men, of consecration to high ideals, of endeavoring to find and follow the law and life of God,— then he was most magnificently religious. Let me repeat here, because it is needed to complete my thought, although I know it is trite, that saying of his concerning getting on to the side of God. When some one asked him why he felt confident that God was on our side, he said, That is a thing I never trouble myself about one way or another: the one thing I am anxious about is to find out where God is, and get on his side. He did not expect to change God; and he tried to find where God was and get beside him. If that makes a man religious, then there is no man in the history of the world more grandly religious than he.

In unselfishness and magnanimity of character, as illustrated in his public attitude and in his dealings with Stanton and Chase, I know of no one with whom to compare him except only the one great soul of Palestine.

One other point at the close. There have been a dozen or twenty theories of the Atonement held since the beginning of speculation. It is too long a story even to hint this morning; but there is a true and profound sense in which the men who have lived grandly and died heroically for truth have atoned. I do not believe — or I should not be in this church — that any one's atonement means a substitution of suffering or goodness for me. I do not believe it

means an appeasing of God's anger or any change in the nature or attitude of God towards any of his children. But I do believe that every man who has been true, every man who has been honest, outspoken, frank, every man who has been faithful to his convictions, every man who has paid the price by unpopularity or pain, any man who has stood firm while fagots have kindled about his feet, any man who for an idea has laid his head on a block, any man who has felt the stifling clutch at his throat for truth, any man who has given himself for God and his fellow-men,— has helped work out the agelong atonement which brings men into perfect reconciliation with God.

So I believe that Lincoln, as I have already said, was bruised for our transgressions. I believe his stripes have helped heal us. His faithfulness, his sorrow, the pangs that he suffered, all these have helped work out the peace, the prosperity, the glory of our great nation.

And if we love Lincoln, if we honor him, if we are worthy of belonging to the same race not simply, but the same country, let us try in our spheres to be a little faithful, as he was much; to be a little true, as he was much; to be a little patient, as he was much; to be a little honest, as he was much; to be a little devoted to the political welfare and uplifting of the people, as he was always devoted. And then we shall not only help him save the country; but by and by we may perhaps stand beside him and overlook the work that has been accomplished here, and feel that we are worthy to join in congratulating him on what he accomplished and what we helped to bring to fuller fruition.

I wish to close by reading you two or three lines from Lowell's "Commemoration Ode," the finest tribute, I think that has ever been paid to this greatest of men:—

> Nature, they say, doth dote,
> And cannot make a man
> Save on some worn-out plan,
> Repeating us by rote:

For him her Old World moulds aside she threw,
And, choosing sweet clay from the breast
Of the unexhausted West,
With stuff untainted shaped a hero new,
Wise, steadfast in the strength of God, and true.
How beautiful to see
Once more a shepherd of mankind indeed,
Who loved his charge, but never loved to lead;
One whose meek flock the people joyed to be,
Not lured by any cheat of birth,
But by his clear-grained human worth,
And brave old wisdom of sincerity!
They knew that outward grace is dust;
They could not choose but trust
In that sure-footed mind's unfaltering skill,
And supple-tempered will
That bent like perfect steel to spring again and thrust.
His was no lonely mountain-peak of mind,
Thrusting to thin air o'er our cloudy bars,
A sea-mark now, now lost in vapors blind;
Broad prairie rather, genial, level lined,
Fruitful and friendly for all human kind,
Yet also nigh to heaven and loved of loftiest stars.
Nothing of Europe here,
Or, then, of Europe fronting mornward still,
Ere any names of Serf and Peer
Could Nature's equal scheme deface
And thwart her genial will;
Here was a type of the true elder race,
And one of Plutarch's men talked with us face to face.
I praise him not; it were too late;
And some innative weakness there must be
In him who condescends to victory
Such as the Present gives, and cannot wait,
Safe in himself as in a fate.
So always firmly he:
He knew to bide his time,
And can his fame abide,
Still patient in his simple faith sublime,
Till the wise years decide.
Great captains, with their guns and drums,
Disturb our judgment for the hour,
But at last silence comes;

These all are gone, and, standing like a tower,
Our children shall behold his fame,
The kindly-earnest, brave, foreseeing man,
Sagacious, patient, dreading praise, not blame,
New birth of our new soil, the first American.

Father, we thank Thee for him, Thy great, noble son. We thank Thee that we are fellow-countrymen of his, that the same blood beats in our veins, the same aspirations lift up our hearts, the same great future awaits us and our children. May we be worthy of him; and may we, in gratitude to Thee for giving him to us, try to live as he lived, and help our country as he helped it. Amen.

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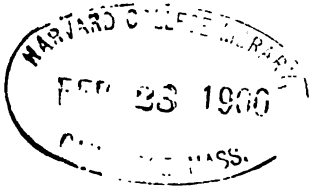

THE KIND OF SALVATION WHICH THE WORLD NEEDS.

As a text, I have taken from the second chapter of the letter to the Philippians the last part of the twelfth and the whole of the thirteenth verses,— "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure."

As soon as men had developed sufficiently so they could look out over the world and observe, they noted certain facts,— facts which have been in existence from that day to this. These facts included pain, what is called moral evil, conscious and more or less wilful wrong-doing on the part of men and women, disease, and death. And, whatever else men may have tried to do, they have attempted, not only to account for the existence of such facts as these, but have made it the great strenuous endeavor of the world to be rid of them. And, whatever else the world's religions may have been, they have always had an intellectual side to them, — a side that has consisted of theory, which has attempted to account for these disagreeable facts; and, as I said, it has been the one great object of the world, the world's religions, to save men from these evils.

It has been assumed that they could not have been intended from the first, could not have been a part of the very nature of things; and so one theory after another has been invented to account for their existence. We find that many primitive tribes have found the reason for them in a very simple way. They have come to believe that they were surrounded on every hand by invisible spirits, spirits good,

spirits indifferent, spirits evil; and these have come at last to take on the outline of gods, of greater or less dignity and power. And they have said, The good things of life are the results of the will and the activities of the good gods, and the evil things of life have been the results of the activities of the evil gods,—those that have delighted in mischief, those that for one reason or another have hated men.

As, however, the world advanced, in some parts of it, to a monotheistic conception, and came to believe in only one God, then the difficulty of accounting for the existence of these moral evils seemed to increase. You will find passages in the early part of the Old Testament in which God is represented as frankly saying that he is the author of good and evil, of happiness and sorrow, of light and of darkness. This, of course, represents the conception of the writer concerning God.

But at a later period it seemed to the thinkers impossible to suppose that a perfect God could have created anything evil, that a good God should have desired the existence of suffering, that an almighty God should have permitted it. And so you see the dilemma that confronted the human mind.

Out of this difficulty sprang, in some parts of the world, a supposed explanation, which consisted of the thought that in some previous state of existence the spirits had rebelled against God for one cause or another, and that these spirits had tempted man, and had persuaded him also to rebel against God; and so all the evils that have afflicted mankind have come into existence. They have said, God cannot have meant it; but the leader of the evil spirits — Lucifer, the fallen one, the son of the morning, now the leader of the hosts of perdition, the devil, Satan — has caused all this evil. It did not occur to these philosophers to take the next logical step, and note that, even if this were true, God was just as responsible for his existence as for

the existence of the evils which he was supposed to have explained. So that the difficulty really remained the same.

I wish, however,— and this is all that is necessary for me just now,— to note that the theologies of the world have been intellectual attempts to account for the existence of different kinds of evil; and they have been schemes or plans for the deliverance of mankind from these evils. This statement is universally true. We have no time this morning — neither is it necessary for us — to concern ourselves with more than two of the great theories of the world. I propose to refresh your thinking with what, in some general way, you are perfectly familiar. Judged by the reasoning of the people with whom I come in contact day by day, there are only a few who think logically and clearly, so as to see the implications of their thinking, and find out really where they stand.

Jonathan Edwards wrote a book called "The History of Redemption." It is, really, from his point of view, a history of the world; for the history of the world to him was merely the history of God's attempt to redeem fallen men. When I was young, there was a very popular book among the ministers with whom I was associated called "The Philosophy of the Plan of Salvation." This also undertook to outline in some general way the entire history of human progress, making it coincide with this scheme of salvation. And this is perfectly logical and natural from this old point of view; and I wish to call your attention clearly to the fact that it is this particular scheme which underlies every one of the great churches of Christendom, which constitutes the framework of all the great theologies and of all the dominant creeds as they have existed in the past and as they exist on paper to-day. Let us trace the outlines of the history of the world, then, according to this theory.

According to this God created the world suddenly, a few thousand years ago. It is about six thousand, according to the Biblical chronology. It had been in existence only a very

short time — of course, this world, including Adam and Eve, all the varieties of animals and creatures that swim in the sea and fly in the air — when Satan appears upon the scene. He assumes the form of a serpent. He walks, in some way, upright, though we do not know how, is able to appear to Eve and talk with her, as she is in the garden. She listens to his seductive conversation; and, as a result of it, she believes what he has said and partakes of the forbidden fruit. As the result of this, not only are Adam and Eve cast out of the garden, but all their descendants to all time are not only made subject to pain and disease and moral evil and death, but they become, in a way that it is impossible for our ethics to-day to conceive, guilty. There is not an old creed in Christendom still that does not declare them guilty for being born the descendants of Adam and Eve.

There has been a great controversy very recently between St. George Mivart, the great English scientist, and Cardinal Vaughan, in which, on behalf of the Catholic Church, this conception of original sin and guilt, and eternal damnation as the result of it, have been emphatically reaffirmed. And this is in all the creeds: there is not an exception; it is the underlying conception of all the creeds.

The first point, then, in the history of the world after the creation is the fall of Man. Then God appears upon the scene. He talks with Adam and Eve, and gives some vague and indefinite promise of some kind of salvation that is to come in the future. As years go by, occasionally an angel is sent to some man with a message. Then, later, God is supposed to have inspired certain men to deliver messages. Some of them have been written down; and some have not. At last these messages comprised whole books, so that the Old Testament came into existence. Then, after that had been completed for a couple of hundred years, the second great act in the world-drama begins to be manifested.

A little babe is born; and it turns out that he is miraculously conceived, and the Church learns, though it is not

sure of it until three hundred years later, that this little babe was the Almighty God of the universe, that he came down and assumed the form of man, lived for a little over thirty years, taught, suffered, died on the cross, went down to hell, then rose from the dead and ascended into heaven, wearing the very body that he had on the cross.

Note, this again is emphatically reaffirmed by the Catholic Church in its controversy. Here, then, is the doctrine of atonement, brought about by the suffering and death of God himself on behalf of man. This is to satisfy God's justice. How? By somebody suffering instead of the sinner, and by righteousness being attributed to the sinner, so that he can be treated as good in spite of the fact that he is not good. This is the second great act in this world-drama of redemption.

Since that time God has been supposed to be engaged in doing all he could to save men. The Church has been organized, the Holy Spirit has been at work for two thousand years trying to convert people; and we are to understand — and this is the third great point I wish to emphasize, though you know it so well — all the people from the beginning of the world who have not accepted this one atonement, this only method of salvation, as fast as they have died, have gone down to endless hell. Thousands and thousands and thousands now are plunging over the abyss into this eternal ruin, merely because they have not accepted the one only condition of salvation.

Now this is the outline of human history according to what has come to be called Orthodoxy, whether it is the Orthodoxy of the Catholic Church, the Greek Church, the Anglican Church, the Presbyterian, Methodist, Baptist, or any one of a hundred orthodox sects. Whatever varieties of belief may appear in this direction or that, these great central things are authoritatively taught as changelessly true. And though ministers on every hand will tell you that they do not believe this part of it or that, and though people who

sit in the pews are sometimes indignant because these things are referred to and pressed on their attention, and though they emphatically deny that they believe them, yet note, if any minister dares to question them, he is suspected, and is tried for heresy; and no man can become a minister in any of these churches to-day who clearly and emphatically denies the historic reality of the fall of Man in Adam or the atonement through the death of God in the person of Jesus Christ or the endless punishment that waits those who have not accepted the one condition of being saved. No man to-day can be ordained a minister in any of these churches who dares emphatically to say that he does not accept these things.

Now every little while the quiet, calm, peace, of the churches are disturbed by some zealous people who wish to rouse them to engage in saving men. A curious condition of affairs! Churches organized for the very purpose of saving men from the wrath of God need to be stirred, stimulated, prayed with, preached at, roused on every hand to make them care. And there are certain men called "revivalists," who travel over the country to wake up the churches, to make them appreciate what they are in existence for.

This winter there has been a good deal of excitement in the neighboring Borough of Brooklyn, and an equal excitement and of a similar kind in the city of Boston. Certain of these revivalists have attacked, by name, us Unitarians, because it seemed to them that we specially stood in the way of the world's being saved. And Unitarians have been very indignant; and liberal orthodox and liberal Presbyterians and liberal Episcopalians have been very indignant, too, and have refused to join in this work because Unitarianism has been attacked.

And yet, friends, Dr. Robertson in Boston, Dr. Broughton and Dr. Dixon in Brooklyn, were right, perfectly right, clearly and unquestionably logical in their position. If men

fell in Adam, and are under the wrath and curse of God, and are going straight to eternal pain unless they comply with the conditions of the Catholic Church or the Greek Church or the Anglican Church or some one of the Protestant churches, what ought the people in these churches to be doing? What do you think of a man who really believes this, who is interested in fast horses,— cares to have the finest trotting stable in the country? What do you think of a woman who really believes this, who devotes her life to parties and balls, and operas, and social success? What do you think of men and women whose main object in life is to make money, accumulate works of art, delight themselves with literature and with music? What do you think of this kind of people, if it be true that men fell in Adam, and must accept the atonement wrought out by a dying God, or else go to eternal hell? What do you think of orthodox church members, by the thousand, who seem never to think of it nor care, but devote themselves to everything else but the saving of human souls? And what do you think of people who are startled and indignant when a revivalist comes along and tells them that they ought to care?

Mr. Moody said, "Morality don't touch the question of salvation." And he was right, from his theory, from this theory which I am speaking of and which underlies all the churches. When Dr. Dixon and Dr. Broughton say that Unitarianism is standing in the way of human salvation, they are right, if theirs is the one condition of human salvation, if that is really the state of affairs. And we are confronted by this curious conclusion,— the better a man is, if he is not "converted," the worse he is and worse it is for the world. Why? Because if a man is very good, he may persuade himself that that is enough; and so the very fact that he is good may stand in the way of his complying with the conditions of salvation, and other people, seeing that he is very good, may make the same mistake, and think that all they need to do and be is to be very good. Note,

this has absolutely nothing to do with it, if the great creeds of Christendom are true. For the world is in rebellion against God, born rebels according to all the creeds. And, as I had occasion to tell you once before, a year or two ago, if a man is a rebel against the government, he deserves death. This has been the universal belief, at any rate; and no government has ever raised the question as to whether he was a moral man, as to whether he was kind to his wife and loved his children, as to whether he paid the debts. What would you think if a man had attempted to overthrow the government, and his lawyer should come into the governmental court, and plead: Yes, I know he is a traitor, he tried to destroy the government. But he is a good man: he is kind to his family, he pays his debts. He ought to be let off. Would pleas of that sort be permitted? Do you not see that they have nothing to do with the fact of his being a traitor?

So, if we are born tainted with original sin and deserving eternal condemnation, our being morally good has nothing whatever to do with it. And it is true that Unitarians, on this theory of the universe, are the most dangerous people in the community, because they are teaching directly that it is not true, and they are saying that men need to be saved by character.

Now let us note, for a minute, and consider as to whether there is any reason to suppose that this theory is true. Is there any reason to believe in the story of the Garden of Eden, and the talking serpent, and Eve's eating an apple and getting Adam to share it with her, and of God's being angry with them on account of it and casting them out of the garden, and so establishing a relation between them and their unborn children that every man, woman, and child in all the future history of the world should be born corrupt and worthy of eternal death? Is there any reason to believe that?

Everybody knows that, if we are to be governed by rea-

son, by facts, by evidence, there is no more reason why I should believe in the story of the Garden of Eden than why I should believe in the story of the Garden of the Hesperides, or the story of the Golden Fleece, or Hercules, or the Golden Age in Italy, when Saturn, the god, lived among men. There is absolutely not one particle of proof on the face of the earth that any such thing is true. Not only that: in the light of our higher ideals of ethics, of right and wrong, such doctrine as this is hideously immoral. I have not time to go into that at length this morning; but the doctrine of the fall of man in Adam, and his condemnation to eternal death on that account, is one of the most immoral, unjust abominations that ever entered into the brain of man. And, for those who love the Nazarene as I do, it is worth while to note that Jesus never said anything about it, did not seem to know it. It is curious, if he did know it, that he should never mention it; and it is curious, if the old prophets knew it, that they should never mention it. In fact, we know to-day that it is a Babylonian or Persian fable, borrowed by the Jews as late as the time of their captivity. It is not even early Hebrew in its origin; and there is absolutely not one particle of fact or evidence on which to rest it. So much for that.

Now let us turn to the second point for just a moment,—the belief that God came down and was incarnated in one man, and suffered and died and went to hell to save men. This, as I intimated a moment ago, was not generally believed on the part of the Church until the early part of the fourth century. It is philosophical speculation, first taking its shape in the Nicene Creed. Many of the Church Fathers did not believe it, so far as we can find out. We know that some of them did not. There is no reason to suppose that the apostles themselves believed it. Paul certainly did not. And there is the best reason in the world for supposing that Jesus did not believe it.

It seems to me a little strange, if Jesus did come down as

God to save mankind, that he should not have mentioned it somewhere; that he should not have mentioned the fall as producing the condition of things from which he came to save men; that he should not have said anything about his being God, of his working out an atonement for a lost humanity. He does not say anything about it. And here again, friends, let me say, calmly and simply and plainly as I know how to put it into speech, that the doctrine of the atonement as it has been taught in the Church is immoral. The idea of substituting somebody's else punishment for the man who deserves it, and substituting somebody's else goodness and giving it to the man who is not good, and delivering a man from hell on that account and admitting him into heaven among the saints by a transaction like that, is worthy only of mediæval subtlety and superstition; and there is absolutely not one particle of evidence on the face of the earth that anything of the kind is true, or ever was true, or ever could be true.

Take the third point,— everlasting hell as the thing that men are to be saved from. This is nothing more nor less than the product of the imaginative horrors and cruelties and brutalities of uncivilized and barbaric and cruel men. It is an infamous libel on God, it is an infamous libel on humanity, to say that the worst man who ever lived could by any possibility deserve it. And here, again, there is not one particle of evidence adducible on the face of the whole earth that any such thing is true. The only way by which people to-day accept these views is by denying the authority of their brains, and saying flatly that reason is out of court, that it is church tradition, and that they accept it on faith. And this "faith" means shutting your eyes, and taking as true the horrible imaginings and superstitions of people who lived so far away that it is impossible now to find out how ignorant or superstitious they were. It is believing because somebody else believed a good while ago; and why he believed, or who he was, nobody knows. There is no

rational ground for the acceptance of any of these things as true.

Now let us turn and note the other theory. What is the other theory of the world's history? And this theory, let me say, friends, lest I should forget it before I am through, is absolutely demonstrated as true. Men have been on this planet two or three hundred thousand years. There never has been any Garden of Eden or perfect condition in the past, and there never has been any fall. That one fact alone — which, as I said, is scientifically demonstrated over and over again to-day — is enough to put this entire scheme with which I have been dealing forever out of court. It goes out of court for every intelligent and free mind. There is not a man in the world to-day who is intelligent and free and dares to think who would undertake in the court of reason to defend any of these things. The keen and brilliant writer in the *Sun*, who has been discussing these matters during the winter and defending the church position, says frankly, These things are all unreasonable; and on the basis of reason we cannot defend them. So we abandon reason and build simply on "faith." That is his position. He admits that they cannot be proved, and that they are unscientific and unreasonable.

There never, then, has been any fall. Man has been climbing slowly up the ages. There was a time when he was without the knowledge of fire, when he had no implements or weapons of any kind but a limb torn off a tree. Then he began to break the rocks into shapes of use, to make arrow-heads and hatchets and spears. He began to be able to dig out a log and make of it a boat. He discovered at last a method by which he could kindle a fire when he pleased; and then he smelted ores, and invented the manufacture of rude kinds of pottery. And by and by speech, which was partly an inheritance and partly an invention, widened in its range and deepened in its power; and he learned to write in some crude sort of fashion. And

then by and by he discovered an alphabet; and then he began to be civilized. He could keep a record of his past, so that the human race began to have a memory; and, comparing its condition with that of its past, it could tell and trace out and forecast the steps of its advance. Then rude songs began to be sung, and there were the beginnings of a literature; and by and by metals of one kind and another came into use. Then men discovered movable type and printing; and the modern world, with its literature, its books, its papers, became a possibility.

And all this time, from the very beginning, men were learning the rudiments of morals. For what are morals? Morals are nothing more nor less than the rules wrought out as the result of human experience, by means of which people are able to live together. There is no need of any supernatural revelation to tell men that they ought not to kill. If people are going to live in this world, it is very plain that they must not kill each other. If people are to own anything, stealing cannot be permitted. So every one of the principles of ethics has been wrought out naturally as the result of human experience. And all this time men have been learning to care for the beautiful. From the first rude sketches on the walls of a cave, man has gone on to the development of the highest and finest artistic products of painting and of sculpture; and out of the rude noises and the sense of rhythm have come all the music of the world, until at last we have the grand symphonies and oratorios and operas of the masters. And then has gone along the development of man as a spiritual creature. He has begun to recognize the fact that there is something in him besides the body, the mind, something besides his care for art for the beautiful. He has imagined himself of kin to the spirit, the power, the life which he has felt throughout the universe. And he has said, I am a son of God.

So, step by step up the ages there has gone on this march of man towards a higher and finer civilization; and all the

theologies of the world have been simply leaves and blossoms coming out, and at last falling from this tree of the growth of human civilization. One after another he has theorized and wrought out this scheme and plan, and a larger and wider knowledge has antiquated it; and he has thrown it aside to go on with a deeper insight and a broader outlook and a more real recognition of the truth.

This is the way the world has gone on. And in the light, if I had time, of this demonstrated truth of evolution, I could give you perfectly adequate and satisfactory explanations of the coming into the ken of man's moral view of these facts of pain and evil and disease and death. Man needs to be saved from these evils which still exist; but he does not need the "salvation" which the revivalists offer, as thousands in the orthodox churches themselves are beginning to recognize and say. Man does not need any official salvation. He does not need to be delivered from any wrath of God. He does not need to be saved from any future fire. Man does not need to be "saved," in the theological sense of that word; for he never has been "lost." There never has been a moment from the beginning of the world until now when the Divine Father has not brooded over his children, revealing himself to them as fast and as far as they were capable of accepting the truth which he had to offer, coming into their brains as truth, coming into their hearts as love, coming into their characters as righteousness, just as fast and just as far as the child was capable of receiving it.

Now what is it that the world needs to be saved from? I propose, in what time is left, to outline a few of these things. Of course, I cannot go into them in any detail.

First, man needs to be saved from ignorance. The ignorant man is constantly misinterpreting the facts of his condition and endeavoring, in some false and unreal way, to escape the evils which he thinks, but is never sure, he sees. We need, then, first to be saved from ignorance.

In the next place we need — oh, how we need! — to be

saved from fear, from superstition,— fear of that horror of God that paralyzes the intellect and makes it impossible for a man freely to think and seek after truth. The old writer said, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom"; and I agree with him in the sense in which he used the word. But this other fear of the Lord,— fear of him as though he were watching for an opportunity, an excuse, to do us harm; fear of him as though his face could become livid with hate as he beheld his weak children trying feebly to find a way; fear of him as though he were ready to punish us if we dared to have a thought of our own; fear of him as though he would send us to hell if we contradicted one of his self-constituted spokesmen, the priests; fear of him as though he were anything but a loving, tender Father, anxious to help us find the truth,— this is horrible and inexcusable, something from which the world needs to be saved.

There is another thing it needs to be saved from; and that is supercilious spiritual self-conceit,— the conceit of the men who say, I have been appointed spokesman of the Omniscient God: if you do not agree with me, there is no hope for you in this world or any other. The world needs to be saved from that, because from the very beginning of the world, one of the worst things that humanity has ever known has been this assumption of infallibility. If I am already infallible, why do I need to learn anything? So, you see, it stands in the way of that humility which is the beginning of all knowledge. And, then, as you look over the world, you see so many infallibilities that you are confused; and they are all fighting each other. We need to be saved, then, from this spiritual self-conceit.

And, then, here are the great evils of the world,— the great real evils that everybody recognizes. Here is pain; here are hunger, poverty of every kind that stunts and hinders human growth, suffering of every kind, disease of every kind, the unsanitary condition of great cities that makes it impossible for children to grow up decent and clean. All these great

evils we all recognize. But do you not see, friends, we cannot to-day unite the great religious brains and hearts and souls of the world to seek out a cure for these evils? And why? Because they have already assumed that there is a terrible hell in some other world which overshadows all these lesser evils, and that the one great thing for them to do is to save people from the wrathful lightning-stroke of the world's great Father; and each one of them, although they all contradict each other, has got the only way to do it. And so age after age they pass in fighting each other over imaginary ills in another state of existence, and cannot possibly combine to save the world from the real ills that are crushing out its heart and its hope right here.

This is why we need, above all things, to be saved from that scheme of things that starts with the fall, that has an atonement wrought out by a dying God midway, and an eternal hell at the end. We need to be saved from that overshadowing hideous nightmare of barbarism, in order that the civilization of the world may unite to wipe off the face of the earth the real evils that threaten and crush the life out of us now.

I believe that the civilized world,— those who are really civilized, who believe,— I care not in what churches they are,— those who believe in God, and who believe he is love and not hate, believe him incapable of the idiocy as well as the immorality of the creation and the fall story and all that follows from them,— I believe that these all ought to unite to save the world from these false traditions and theories which breed horror and lead us astray, so that we may address ourselves to the real causes of human sorrow and human ill.

Pain, most of it, is curable. Disease, nearly all of it, is preventable or curable. Poverty, if people could get over their animalism and their selfishness, is easily curable. This old world can produce a dozen times more than all that is needed to supply every reasonable human want. War is

curable. There are none of these visible evils that confront us that are not curable, if we will only find out the way.

We need, then, to train and educate men intellectually, morally, affectionately, æsthetically, spiritually; teach men that they are children of God; teach them what is true,— that the only real good and happiness are to be found inside the laws of the Father; that all good means obedience to God, and not disobedience.

We need simply to teach the world this. Let men be free, let them dare to study, let them know that these problems can be solved. Let this great hope enter their hearts, let men as brothers and sisters and children of the one Father combine to this end, and the world can be saved.

And, then, when it is saved, in that sense; when man is intelligent and free and kindly and loving and tender and good, when he finds his pleasure in helping others and living in right relation to those around him,— has he anything to fear in the future? Why, he finds this world simply a school, and he learns its lessons and graduates, and he goes out into a world governed by the same Father, in accordance with the same laws; and he finds there, as here, that righteousness is blessedness, and that the only real evil is breaking God's law.

And now, Father, let us seek this salvation for ourselves and for all men; work it out patiently, knowing that it is God working in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure. Amen.

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SERMONS OF M. J. SAVAGE

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How Unitarians Believe in Christ

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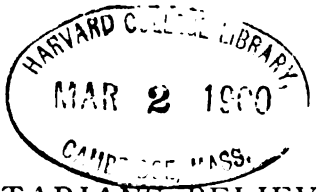

HOW UNITARIANS BELIEVE IN CHRIST.

I TAKE my text from the twenty-second chapter of the Gospel according to Matthew, the question recorded in the forty-second verse, "What think ye of the Christ?"

Just at this particular juncture in the thought and feeling of our city, it seems to me important that I should, as simply and clearly as possible, set forth just how it is that Unitarians believe in Christ.

Since preaching my sermon last Sunday, through the newspapers and through the mail I have been denounced, I have been pleaded with, I have been argued with, I have been grieved over. I do not question in the slightest degree the sincerity, the earnestness, the desire to do good, of the authors of these letters and criticisms. They think they are doing what they ought to do. From their point of view I agree with them. But they have shown in many cases a sad lack of knowledge of what seems to me to be the facts. They misunderstand Unitarians.

Every little while I am asked,—and no doubt you are,—"Why do you celebrate Christmas, with your thought about Jesus? Why do you celebrate the Lord's Supper?" One man has asked me this week why I dared to speak of loving Jesus, when in my sermon I made him out a liar. I speak of this simply to show you that we are misunderstood, and our position is misinterpreted, and how ignorant people are of what I believe to be the plain and simple facts of history.

It seems to me, therefore, worth while, without denouncing anybody or questioning anybody's sincerity, that I

should try to set forth what Unitarians think about Jesus, and how it is that they believe in him.

I have taken for my text, "What think ye of the Christ?" I wish to ask your attention to the change in that text in the Revised Version. The article "the" precedes the word "Christ." And this is important for us to note; for the word "Christ" is not a personal name. It is an official title: it is the Greek translation of the Hebrew word "Messiah"; and it was applied to Jesus of Nazareth only after some had come to believe that he had fulfilled the ancient Jewish expectation as to the coming of a Messiah.

Now, when we speak of believing in Christ, we need to remember that words are only symbols for thoughts and feelings, and that frequently they are poor symbols. They do not represent with anything like accuracy what we think or feel when we are uttering them; and, though they may be very clear in our minds, we are never in the least degree certain that, when we use a word or a term, it will call up in the feeling of another person that which precisely answers to our own emotion when we utter it, or that it will evoke a thought in some other mind which is the precise counterpart of our own. In other words, we are being perpetually misunderstood because we use words with different significations.

When Unitarians talk about believing in the Christ, in order to be clear and to be sure we are understood, we must try to find out just what a Unitarian means when he says "the Christ"; and we must distinguish it from what certain other people mean when they say "the Christ."

Before I proceed to enter upon that, however, I need to make one or two more preliminary remarks. It follows from the genius and organization of Unitarians that some other Unitarian might question my right to speak for him, because Unitarians are intellectually free. They are not bound by any written or printed creed; and a great many Unitarians would put their statement of belief in Christ in

somewhat different words from those in which I shall embody it this morning. And yet I wish to say to you frankly what I believe, after years of observation, to be true, that the result of our Unitarian liberty is not a wide and contradictory diversity of thinking. I sincerely believe that there is no religious denomination in Christendom more generally united in regard to its great essential principles and beliefs than is the Unitarian. And this, if you stop and think of it a moment, is natural. We are not compelled by any outside authority to say that we believe a thing whether we do or not. We are not threatened or frightened by anybody. We are left free to seek for the truth. We have no motive except to find the truth; and we have certain canons and methods. We accept scientific proof, we believe that nothing is sure until it is investigated and proved; and so we naturally and freely gravitate towards agreement instead of diversity. So that I think it is true that there is no denomination in Christendom so simply and generally united in its belief as the Unitarian. It is only fair, however, that I should make this statement as preliminary to the expression of my own personal views.

I am to ask you now for a little to go with me while I try to find the real Jesus. You know perfectly well, those who differ from me ever so widely as well as those who agree with me, that there are divergent views of Jesus, that the world is not in agreement in regard to his birth or his nature or why he came into the world or why he left it, or as to what official position he holds to-day. There are wide-spread differences of belief about him. People do not mean to be unreasonable. They think they have some good foundation for their opinions. They ought to be ready and frank, as I try to be, to find out whether these opinions are well founded or not.

A writer in the New York *Tribune* has said that it has been the universal belief of Christendom for eighteen hundred years or more that all the Church Fathers held and

taught the deity of Christ. He said this in supposed contradiction of the position that I took in regard to that matter last Sunday. He speaks of me as the one obstinate juryman with eleven opposed to him. He says that universal Christendom has taught that the Church Fathers and Paul and the apostles believed in the deity of the Christ.

Now I wish to say just one word in regard to this matter of majorities. Even though this statement of his were true, would it prove very much? If you are to decide great questions of religious or ethical or scientific or literary or artistic criticism by a show of hands, by a majority vote, the truth ninety-nine times in a hundred would be voted down, would it not? Would you get a majority vote of the people of New York for the finest picture, for the noblest piece of literature, for the most beautiful work of art, for the highest religious or ethical truth anywhere? In other words, in regard to these great problems of the world, the majority almost always has been in the wrong. It is the few thinkers, the clear-headed students, those who care and try to find out the truth, who have generally been right, and who age after age have convinced, now a few and then more, until by and by popular opinion has turned their way.

Take it in the case of Jesus himself. Suppose the question between him and his contemporaries had been decided by a popular vote. Take it in the case of any of the great thinkers or leaders of the world. But that only by the way.

I propose now to verify the statement I made last Sunday in regard to the attitude of the principal Church Fathers. I do this, not for the sake of my critic in the *Tribune:* I do it for the sake of helping on clear thinking in the city, so far as I can reach those people who care to think.

I am to read you now a brief list of names. Those of you who are familiar with the facts will recognize that they are among the very greatest, best known, most illustrious of the Church Fathers.

Polycarp, who belonged to the second century, Justin Martyr, who belonged to the second century, Clement, who belonged to the third century, Irenæus, who belonged to the third century, Tertullian, of the third century, Origen, of the third century, Lactantius, of the fourth century, Gregory, of the fourth century,— every single one of these great, leading, illustrious Church Fathers are witnesses to the fact that the generally accepted doctrine of the first three Christian centuries was the supreme deity of the Father only, and the subordinate and created nature of the Christ. I wish to read you just a line or two from Justin Martyr. He says, "There is a Lord of the Lord Jesus, being his Father and God and the cause of his existence."

Tertullian, one of the most zealous of the Church Fathers on behalf of the new doctrine of the deity of the Christ, says himself that, when it was first propounded, it startled people. The greater part of the believers, he says, were startled by it as an innovation, something new. They were not ready to accept it. And Gregory says that, in the great struggle which culminated in the battle of Nicæa and the formation of the Nicene Creed, Athanasius stood almost alone in the Church in holding these views. During this fourth century more than half of the Church was Arian; that is, they believed that Jesus was not equal with God. You have some of you heard that at the Council of Nice influences not entirely spiritual or religious were at work in deciding the doctrine that Jesus is of the same nature with the Father; for note the Nicene Creed itself is not quite Trinitarian, in the orthodox use of that word. It teaches that Christ is of the same nature as the Father, but it does not go so far as to declare the equality of the Holy Ghost with either the Father or the Son.

Now after the decision in favor of Athanasius see what influences were at work. The Emperor Theodosius, in 380, drove the Arians by force out of the churches of the East, and installed at their head a bishop who was in favor of

the Athanasian position. And Karl Hase the great German historian, author of a History of the Church, says that, in order to legalize this action of his, which was violent, he called together a hundred and fifty bishops, chosen as the result of his arbitrary dictation. They constituted what is called the Council of Constantinople, met in the year 381, which proclaimed the Holy Spirit as equal with the Father and the Son. But even then they did not quite complete the statement of the Trinity as it has been held in the modern churches. That statement was not finally made until the early part of the thirteenth century; that is, not made by any general council of the Church. Saint Augustine was one of the great champions of the new thought; and yet he says that he was in the dark about it until he found the true doctrine concerning the divine Word in a Latin translation of some Platonic writings. He admits that he was influenced by Greek philosophical speculation; and he did not find the doctrine taught in any part of the Scriptures.

And now Neander, one of the most famous Church historians, and an orthodox man to the backbone, says that the doctrine of the Trinity was no necessary or essential part of Christianity, as may clearly be seen from the fact that it is not taught in any one passage in the New Testament.

I submit to you that these facts justify what I said last Sunday in regard to the attitude of the more noted of the old Church Fathers.

We have to go back, then, beyond the Council of Nice, in order to find the real, historic Christ. The Church Fathers of the first and second centuries, none of them, believed — there is no evidence that a single one of them believed — anything but that which is substantially the Unitarian position.

Now let us take a step beyond the Fathers: let us come to Paul. Paul died somewhere about the year 66. Paul, as you know, was the first one of the New Testament writers; that is, Paul's authentic Epistles were written before

either of the Gospels, before any of the other books of the New Testament. Now I wish you to note Paul's teaching. He teaches everywhere, with perfect explicitness, the subordinate position of Jesus. He believed that Jesus was pre-existent, and that he was sent to this earth by the Father on a special mission of salvation for man; but he teaches not only the heretical doctrine of universal salvation, but he teaches the definite subordination of Jesus. He says that all things are to be put under the feet of Jesus; but he goes on, when this is said, to say that, when all things are put under him, it is manifest that he — God — is excepted, being the One who has made all things subject to him. And, when all things are subject to him and his law, then he is to deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father; and God is to be all and in all. This is the explicit teaching of Paul in Corinthians.

Now note another thing. Paul does not know anything about a miraculous conception, any of the wonderful birth-stories,— he does not know anything about the physical resurrection of Jesus. It would have been greatly to Paul's advantage in his missionary work if he could have referred to the supernatural birth of Jesus; but he is absolutely silent on the whole subject, showing clearly that he knew nothing about it. This takes us to the year 66, the time of Paul's death.

Now take a step beyond Paul. Every scholar knows that the Gospels were not written in the shape in which we have them to-day, with the exception of the Gospel of John, — which I shall refer to in a moment,— but that they are growths, compilations, traditions brought together, edited at a late date, and edited we know not by whom. No one knows the authorship of either one of the Gospels. Every scholar knows he may, if he chooses, hunt for reasons for holding a specified belief, stated in some creed; but he knows, at any rate, that there is good ground for doubt on the part of earnest, critical, devout scholars, and that most

of the scholars are free to say frankly that they do not know. The Gospel of John was written probably as late as 125, perhaps as late as 150, nobody knows by whom. I speak of this because my critics, those who write about it in the papers, assume everywhere not only the absolute authority of any text they can pick out, but with the same absolute authority of their particular sectarian interpretation of the text. We Unitarians know that nobody has any right to use the New Testament in any such fashion. Nobody knows who wrote the Gospel of John; but the Gospel of John does not teach the deity of Christ. It appears to in certain superficial phrases; but I cannot go into it deeply this morning.

There was a sect of philosophers in the first and second centuries called Gnostics. They had certain phrases and terms which marked the Gnostic philosophy, just as "the survival of the fittest," and terms like that, mark modern Darwinism. Now suppose, in two thousand years from now, if Darwinism should be forgotten, some one should come across the phrase "survival of the fittest." He would not know what it meant, and would be sure to interpret it wrongly, because he would know nothing about the philosophy of which it was a part. So there are phrases all through the Gospel of John, and other parts of the New Testament, which belonged to the Gnostic philosophy, and which, to interpret aright, one must be familiar with the Gnostic ideas.

The Greek word pleroma is translated "fulness." When the writer says that "in him dwells all the pleroma," — that is, the "fulness" of the Godhead bodily,— he is not teaching the deity of Christ: he is teaching quite the opposite. Precisely the same is true of any number of phrases in the Gospel according to John. Jesus is represented as saying, "I and my Father are one"; and in close connection he prays that the disciples may be one with him as he is one with the Father. So, if this proves his equality with God, it proves

the equality of the disciples with him and with God. If any one will think a little about the use of terms, they will discover all these things to be true on the surface. They need not dig deep, as the scholar does.

The first three Gospels were gathered together and edited by unknown hands. Nobody knows who they were. Mark is the oldest of the Gospels; and so I will take a further step towards Jesus, and ask you to note this. Mark has no birth-stories, no wonderful cycle of tales in regard to the supernatural origin of Jesus; and he is the earliest of the Gospel writers. He has no story of the supernatural resurrection of the body; for the last half of the last chapter of Mark every student knows is a later addition, and does not belong there. So the birth-stories are later than the Gospel according to Mark, later than Paul. Nobody knows just when they did come into existence, probably somewhere near the end of the first century; and they are absolutely without any foundation that can be regarded as historical.

Take a step further. Note one or two other things about the Gospels. Did you ever see the significance of the genealogical tables as recorded in Matthew and Luke? They originated before any one ever dreamed that Joseph was not the father of Jesus, because they trace the genealogy of Jesus from David down to Joseph, not to Mary at all; and, of course, if Joseph was not his father, these genealogical tables have no more to do with Jesus than they have with Julius Cæsar. It is perfectly apparent that these grew up while Joseph was supposed to be the father of Jesus. All this cycle of wondrous story, of beautiful poetry, concerning his Bethlehem origin, — the wise men and the star,— all these were late and traditional and mythical in their origin. After Jesus came to be believed in as the Messiah, then they said, If he is the Messiah, of course he was born, not in Nazareth, but in Bethlehem, because the Jews have always expected that he would be born in Bethlehem. And yet Jesus himself con-

tradicts the idea that the Messiah must be the descendant of David. The writer makes Jesus say, "David calls him Lord; and, if he calls him Lord, how, then, is he his son?" Jesus is represented thus as taking ground against the necessity of the Messiah's being a descendant of David.

Now we are not captious critics. We want to sift the traditions and stories and literature of the last eighteen hundred years until we can come to the real Jesus. We must put aside that child-world story of the star. It was easy, believing in the old-time universe, when the stars were thought to be hardly more than candles against the blue background of a solid heaven, to have one of them move and stand over a certain place to guide the way. But, when we know that this little planet of ours is one of the tiniest in all the deeps of space (and that our sun, itself a million and a half times the size of the earth, is a tiny candle compared with some other suns), can we intelligently suppose that this universe was interfered with to have one of these great bodies move down close to the earth to guide shepherds in a way which they might very easily have found out without so much trouble?

Then the three kings. If America had been discovered, there must have been a fourth; for this is no more than an echo of the supposed idea that all the known continents paid tribute to the infant king. There were three to represent, Europe, Asia, and Africa. America being unknown, there was no one to represent it.

We are not captious: we are earnest, eager seekers after Jesus; but we want not a theological figment, we want not the creation of fallible councils, we want not the imagination of ignorant and dark ages of cruelty and superstition. We want Jesus, the son of God, and our brother; and is it any wonder that he has had to wait eighteen hundred years to be found? Since Theodosius drove out those who dared to think from all the churches of the East, there has not been an hour when a person could seek simply and freely

after Jesus without peril of the rack and thumb-screw, torture in this world and endless torture in the next. What do majorities count when they have been majorities summoned by force and maintained by threats of death in this life and of endless torment hereafter? Even to-day, nobody can burn me for my opinions, as they would gladly have done a little while ago; but they can hound Dr. Briggs, they can hound Professor McGiffert out of his Church, out of all the dear associations of his surroundings. They can cast obloquy upon his name. They can make it unpleasant for him and impossible for him to live after the fashion which he would freely choose.

There is not liberty yet for the hungry human heart to seek after and find the real Jesus, the loving son of God. We have got to go back of the Gospels; and, when we are there, we Unitarians, as the result of all the careful, prolonged study and search of years, believe that we find him, — the son of the carpenter in Nazareth, but, while the carpenter's son, the grandest of all the sons of men, the outflowering, the supreme result of the life, the aspiration, the hunger and thirst of that nation which has been distinguished above and beyond all other peoples for its genius in the realm of religion, the last and greatest of the teachers and prophets, the holy men of the great Hebrew race.

We believe, then, that this is the Jesus that we wish to accept and make the foundation stone of our religious life. Now what is he to us, when we have found him, this man Christ Jesus? What is he to us? He is first the revelation of God, in a sense that is true of no other man that ever lived. How do I mean that? I mean it in a purely and perfectly natural way. God puts all of himself into a grass-blade that a grass-blade will hold, he puts all of himself into a tree that a tree can hold, he puts all of himself into a bird or an animal that it can hold. But he must have a man that thinks, feels, loves, before he can make any clear or complete manifestation of himself, some one wrought in

his own image; and the highest and completest man will be the clearest and most nearly perfect revelation of himself.

Suppose nobody had ever seen the sun. They had seen the rays of the sun shining through a window or reflected from some crystal. Now the more perfect the crystal, the more completely it could take in the rays of the sun and send them out again, the more completely would it be a revelation of the nature of the sun, its brilliancy and beauty and power. So the most complete man, the religious genius, the one who submits his will perfectly to the Father, he is the one great clear revelation of the Father to his brethren; and we believe in Jesus as such a revelation of God.

What next? We believe in him as a revelation of humanity to itself. If you wish to find out what human nature is, you do not go to some dwarfed or one-sided or degraded or partial expression of it in some particular man. Find the completest man you can, and there, we say, is manhood; that is humanity, that is what humanity can be; that is what it is in its essential nature and in its highest expression. And so, when we look in the face of the Nazarene, we see, not only a perfectly natural, but divine revelation of the Father: we see also the highest and clearest expression of the possibility of man. So he reveals to us what we are and what we may become.

Another thing: we cannot copy or imitate something or some one essentially unlike ourselves. We cannot take an animal or a bird as our example; and, if you tell me that God is essentially unlike me, I cannot take him for an example. But Jesus, being the manifestation of the Father, and being also my brother,— a complete specimen of what a man may be,— becomes to me an example, some one I can copy, some one whose footsteps I may trace and follow, trying, however far behind, to keep him in sight and make him a goal towards which I strive. And, becoming such an example as this, he becomes also, by virtue of that power of love

and attraction which is in him, an inspiration, himself a perpetual challenge. Just as, for example, an art student goes abroad. Why? Because there is nothing beautiful here to paint? Not at all. He goes that he may find the grandest specimens of the masters of all ages. He studies in the National Gallery in London, in the Louvre in Paris, at Dresden, Florence, Rome, Venice, and Madrid. He goes that he may copy the great work of the great men, and that he may feel the challenge of their accomplishment, measure himself, know what a man can do, and find out how near he can climb to their magnificent achievement.

Thus Jesus is example and inspiration for us in the religious life. And by his undoubted teaching, when we have sifted away that which has been, so far as we can find out, put into his mouth by unauthentic reporters, we find a body of teaching so simple, so sublime, so human, so divine, that the world looks at it still as its unapproached and almost unapproachable goal. I wish you to notice, that you may understand Unitarians, that we believe a part of the things that make up the gospel record are utterly unauthentic. Remember, the Gospels are out of our sight, after they come into existence, for a hundred and fifty years; and we know that during that time they were in the hands and keeping of men who did not scruple in other directions to forge, to make false records, to set down whatever they believed would help their party, which would enable them to establish their peculiar claims and pretensions.

My old orthodox doctor of divinity and theological teacher of years ago told me frankly even then, speaking of the old church historian, Eusebius, "If you can find anywhere the slightest reason for his telling anything false, you are not to believe him."

We know there were any quantity of epistles, gospels, and apocalypses forged during this first century or two. They were fathered upon all the great names; and men did it in the interests of a theological controversy, to establish this

position or that. So, merely because you find a text in the New Testament, you are not to be perfectly certain that it ought to be there; or, if you find certain words put upon the lips of Jesus, you are not to be certain that he uttered them: you are to make a study, and sift the true from the false.

We have no manuscript of any part of the New Testament nearer to Jesus than the fourth century; and they differ from each other in hundreds of places, sometimes to the extent of paragraphs or half-chapters. Is it not perfectly plain, then, that nobody can be certain of the reading of particular texts?

Now we believe in the Christ, as I have attempted to set forth; and we believe that there are certain things that we have a right to say to our critics. I know perfectly well that every little while something I say shocks somebody who radically differs from me in my views; but let me impress upon people who feel themselves devoutly solemn in their faith that certain opinions they hold and utter shock me. It is not simply one side that can be shocked. Their pictures of God are shocking to me; their pictures of Jesus are shocking to me; their pictures of human nature are shocking to me; their scheme of salvation shocks my sense of justice and right, from end to end.

I believe — and I could show if I should devote an hour to the theme — that what is called "the plan of salvation" from beginning to end is unjust, cruel, immoral; and it shocks me, shocks my religious sensibilities, shocks my thought of the justice and tenderness and goodness of God, shocks my sense of right as to the treatment of God's children.

Now I wish to say at the end — I wish I had more time to make it clear — that we believe that it is the real historic Jesus, God's son, our brother, that we believe in. And I wish to press it upon those who occupy the opposite position that one of the chief things that I object to on their

part is that it seems to me that they place the emphasis, not in believing *in* Jesus, but in believing certain man-made opinions *about* Jesus.

It is Jesus I believe in, his teaching about the Father, about man, about the future. I do not believe much in the scaffoldings men have built about him. Somebody has said, and there is enough truth in it to give force to the statement, that Christianity has been on trial for hundreds and hundreds of years, but that the religion of Christ remains to be tried. Beliefs about Jesus are one thing, belief in him is another. He teaches the tender and perfect fatherhood. Do the creeds,— the great creeds? The great creeds, while they say, "Father," attribute to him certain characteristics, and say that he does certain things; which seem to me fundamentally and essentially to deny the fatherhood.

Let us note for a moment a few of the undoubted teachings of Jesus. Take the parable of the Prodigal Son. Jesus seems to me sadly lacking in that parable from the orthodox point of view. He does not say anything about any belief or substitution or blood or anything as a condition of the son's acceptance by the father. And yet you would suppose we had a right to expect him to give us the true teaching. So all the way through in the unquestioned teaching of Jesus there is no one of these conditions of salvation. The terms of admission to his kingdom are goodness, love for the Father, and love for the brethren: "Love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and thy neighbor as thyself. This is the whole law and the prophets." This is what Jesus tells us in the most emphatic way.

Jesus teaches us the fatherhood; and we believe in him and his doctrine of the fatherhood. He teaches the divine brotherhood of all men. Has the Church practised any doctrine of divine brotherhood? Note, Jesus says, "Call no man father. Call no man master." Yet every priest is "Father," and the pope is "Father" of them all,— in flat

denial of the express command of Jesus. He says, "The rulers of the Gentiles have exercised lordship over them; but it shall not be so among you. He that is greatest among yóu shall be your servant." And yet there has been no such lordship, no such dictatorial domination, no such tyranny on the face of God's earth, as the Church itself has set up, in express and flat contradiction to the very commands of Jesus.

He teaches the perfect brotherhood of men, of all men; that God is kind to the unthankful and the evil. What has the Church done? The Church has not said, "We will accept men on a basis of their goodness." Only this last week or two Cardinal Vaughan, speaking for the pope, with the authority of the Church behind him, has told St. George Mivart, the great scientist and Catholic, that he must believe, for example, that the origin of the diversities of human speech was the fear of God on the part of the people on the plain of Shinar, that otherwise they would have built a tower and scaled heaven, and that, if he does not accept that, he is in peril of his soul and everlasting torment.

When one of the disciples proposed to "forbid" a man who walked not with them, Jesus said: "Forbid him not. He that is not against us is for us." He told a too zealous partisan, "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of." It was always and only the self-righteous and spiritually conceited that he blasted with his lightning denunciations. The weak, the frail, the troubled souls he tenderly entreated.

The Church puts unsupported beliefs, irrational beliefs, between brethren, and cuts off and excludes from all hope of mercy and all love of God all those who dare to use the brains that God has given them, and do a little thinking for themselves.

We believe in the Father as Jesus taught him, in human brotherhood as Jesus taught it, in human goodness as the one condition of acceptance with God as Jesus taught it.

So we are burning with desire to find him. We thread our perilous and difficult way down the ages until we come to the little cottage at Nazareth, and find the newly born child, born of a love holier than any virginity, the love of a true father and a true mother; born of the love of God,—our brother, our teacher, our inspiration, our helper, our leader; and in him, unitedly, lovingly, reverently, and with consecration of heart and soul, we Unitarians believe.

Father, we consecrate ourselves anew to Thee this morning. We give Thee our brains and our hearts, we give Thee our money and our time, we give Thee our loyal service to-day and evermore. Amen.

Life Beyond Death

Being a Review of the World's Beliefs on the Subject, a Consideration of Present Conditions of Thought and Feeling, leading to the Question as to whether it can be demonstrated as a Fact.

To which is added an Appendix containing Some Hints as to Personal Experiences and Opinions.

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JAMES MARTINEAU

BY

REV. ROBERT COLLYER

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JAMES MARTINEAU.

"James, a servant of God."— JAMES i. 1.

SINCE the news was flashed over to us that James Martineau was dead, I have thought that I would love to say some word about his life, and life's work, so noble to me, and beautiful as it must be to thousands in the Old World and the New who have known him as a man, or through the books he published, which hold the choicest treasure of his life and genius, which in such a man are essentially one and the same. And, touching his life, three memories return to me I will dwell on for a few moments. One is from the Life of his eminent sister, and two are my own. His sister says: "I remember, when I was under three years of age, that I was in our best chamber one day, where the curtains were drawn and the blinds let down, so that I was afraid. But the nurse was there also, who set me down in a tiny chair, and laid something on my lap wrapped in soft flannel; and, unfolding the wrapping, I saw the little red face of a baby." It was the face of her brother James, one day old, the man child, whose life was to be prolonged so far beyond the threescore years and ten set down in the ancient Psalm as the fair limit of our human life, and so free from the labor and sorrow, the seer says, will fall to the lot of those who by reason of their strength come to fourscore years.

No such penalty was laid on him as this the old seer thought of, to the end of almost fourscore and fifteen years, when his lovers and friends in the great city looked for the last time on the face his small sister saw for the first time on the 21st of April in the year 1805.

Then my own memory belongs to a time twenty-eight years ago last summer, when I was invited to preach the sermon at the annual meeting of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association in London; and there for the first time I saw the face and heard the voice of our "James, a servant of God,"— the voice so soft and clear, but by no means loud, reminding you of the voice of our own Orville Dewey. I was his guest also in the home where he died just now, and preached in his chapel on a Sunday, when he took the printed services, and sat with him one sunny morning in his library through some happy hours,— happy, that is, to me. I remember also saying with regret, when we parted, "I would so love to hear you preach, sir, but shall not be able." "Well," he answered, "we will do the next best thing or perhaps the better. I will give you a sermon I have not printed." The sermon was burnt in the great fire in Chicago a month after we came home, with most of my own.

This was the first time I came in touch with our great and good apostle, and the memory is clear almost as when I left him that day.

He was then well turned the sixty years of age, but his eyes were not dim or his natural strength abated. They were the seer's eyes, blue shot through with gray, keen some moments as the glance of an eagle, and steadfast as the stars,— a man still in the fair latter summer of our life.

My second memory is of a day in the summer before last, when I was in London, and a message came that he would be glad to see me for half an hour. He was in his ninety-fourth year then, and greatly changed since I saw him before. The silver cord of life was loosed, but the golden bowl was not broken. The good old hand shook now, which had clasped mine in that warm strong clasp so many years ago; but he braced himself when we sat down, and then it lay quite still on his knee. I have noticed that when we attain to such an age, or, say, beyond the four-

score, we are rather given to speak of it with a touch of pride, if we are well still, and strong; but, if we are touched by the penalty we have heard of in the Psalm, we dwell on our complaints, and perhaps augment them by complaining. No word of this on either hand fell from his lips, of self-felicitation or regret. He took the third option, and began presently to tell me of his youth and early manhood, when he was a student in the fine old city of York, preparing for the ministry, and told me how the small band of students would go out from the city on Sunday afternoons to hold services in the villages, how thoroughly he enjoyed those services they held in the cottages and farm-houses, and how glad he had been to hear within no long time that there was still a flowering in some of those villages, from the seed they had planted so long ago, in the Yorkshire wolds.

He said: "Our dear tutor, Mr. Wellbeloved, was quite anxious about this, that we should always preach from a manuscript. So we took one with us, but would be so eager to say what was in our hearts, but not on the paper, that we would brush that aside, and pour out the word fresh from the fountain; but we did not tell the master, and I think he did not ask us."

The good patriarch grew almost hilarious over these memories. There was a joy in them which held no grain of sadness. He had returned, for the moment, to the days of his youth; and the Scripture for him was fulfilled. So we said good-by presently, and I saw his face no more.

Shall I mention another memory which touches my own life? My dear mother was a little maiden of seven years, in the same old city of Norwich, when James Martineau was born; and I wonder whether she may have peered through the gate on some pleasant summer's day in the early years, and seen the child playing there among the plants and flowers. The pretty home and garden were

there thirty years ago, and may be still, but I am not sure,— an English home down to the ground, and the picture of a simple elegance.

The father and mother were Presbyterians by name and Calvinists by tradition rather than by conviction, as so many are now, and worshipped in the octagon chapel still there, built midway in the last century, of which good John Wesley writes in his journal: "I was shewn Dr. Taylor's new meeting-house, perhaps the most elegant in Europe. It is eight square, and built of the finest brick. The inside is finished in the finest taste, and is as clean as any nobleman's saloon. The very latches on the doors are polished brass. How can it be thought that the homely old gospel should find admission here?" I wonder what the old saint would say if he could return, and see some churches here of his own denomination.

I said they were Presbyterians by name and only Calvinists by tradition; for the leaven of the faith we hold and maintain was in the heart of the church, which is Unitarian now, and has been more than eighty years. Indeed, the story of the change is very much the same as that of the Puritan churches in New England, which became Unitarian by name early in this century, as they had been by growth in grace and the knowledge of the truth long before they took the name.

And as the church was, so was the home, free from the iron-clad dogma and the barbed "fine points"; and Sister Harriet says the Sundays were pleasant days for the children, a good report of the home. For over there, as in our New England then, the Sabbath was so sore a burden, so full of gloom and burdensome, that John Ruskin tells us he began to be afraid of the next Sunday, when he was a boy, by Wednesday.

I may note also, before I pass on, that, when the boy James was about eight years old, this old Presbyterian church came out into the open and adopted our name,

called a meeting of delegates from the other churches of our faith in eastern England, organized a missionary society, and held the first annual meeting in the octagon chapel.

And now, if there was time, we might glance at the schools through which the boy passed; but I can only mention one. When he was sixteen, the careful father had made up his mind that James should be an engineer,— a good and noble calling then and always. So he was placed in a machine-shop to learn the craft; but at the end of about a year he threw up his hands, and said: "I cannot be an engineer. I must study for the ministry." He had been to a school in Bristol under the care of Dr. Carpenter, the minister of our chapel, a devout man and full of the Holy Ghost, and had caught the holy fire from him which was to burn to so grand a purpose; while the death of a dear kinsman had also turned his heart toward the ministry, as the true work of his life. The good father was troubled; and, being what we call a man of the world, he said, "My son, to study for the ministry is the way to poverty," with more to the same purpose. But the youth held his own; and so he was sent to our small college in York, about which he told me the bright story, as we sat together those moments in his home. He must not be an engineer, but an evangelist; and so the mystery of fore-ordination and election flashes out for a moment, so I love to believe, as he stands there at the parting of the ways.

May I linger for a few moments over his early life? It was a college course of five years in York, completed when he was twenty-two years of age. Then he taught the school in Bristol for Dr. Carpenter, and at twenty-three was ordained by the Presbyterian brotherhood and called to be the assistant minister of the old church of that name in Dublin, which was partly supported by a gift from the crown so called, of an old date; but, really, it was mainly, as he found, wrung from the hapless Roman Catholics, and this was a grain of flint in the eye of the young man's soul. The

church would not refuse the tainted gift, no matter how he pleaded.

He refused to take the money, and got pupils to eke out his poor stipend. He was married two months after his ordination, and two children had blessed the home. The careful father's words seemed to be coming true, that the ministry was the open way to poverty; but James Martineau could not pawn his soul for that hundred pounds a year or the wealth of a kingdom, so he threw up his ministry, and prepared to go out, not knowing whither he went.

But there was a strong church in Liverpool wanting just such a man. They had heard of him,— some had heard him,— so they opened their arms and their hearts in a warm welcome. Their beloved pastor of the many years was no longer able to bear the whole burden and do the work, so they must take hold together as father and son; and here was the open door through which he passed about sixty-eight years ago to win his most eminent place in our ministry as James, a servant of God. And here is a pen portrait of the young apostle, as he stood there in the pulpit for the first time, by his lifelong friend, Charles Wicksteed: —

"A tall young man, thin, but of a vigorous and muscular frame, with dark hair, pale but not delicate complexion, a countenance in repose full of thought and in animation of intelligence and enthusiasm; features of no regular type or order of beauty, yet giving you the impression of very high beauty; and a voice so sweet and clear, yet not loud, that it held the inspiration without any of the art or intention, when this young man, with the background of his honor and courage, rose to speak of the inspiration that was not in the letter, but in the soul,— a bold stand to take at that time. But we were all taken captive."

A bold stand to take in that first sermon, and the very soul of his teaching from that time to the end of his noble life,— the stand our own great apostle Channing takes when he says, "Jesus came not to shut us up in a book, but

to open the universe as the school of our spiritual education"; and, again, "We cannot comprehend God aright if we do not go beyond revelation and learn in religion from all that we observe." And he says, "Channing was the inspirer of my youth. He led the young men fully to realize what was meant by freedom of the spirit and the religion of the inward life, and that the foundations of Christian truth were in the soul, and must not be left to any proof of miracles, and the human soul is called to a direct personal communion with God."

But our young apostle soon found that Liverpool, apart from our churches, three all told, was a hornets' nest. A stronghold of the most conservative Orthodoxy, her ministers sounded the alarm we have heard so often in this century, the church was in danger and the faith once delivered to the saints, these three men must be answered and silenced,— John Hamilton Thom, Henry Giles, and James Martineau.

Thirteen ministers of the orthodox faith and order challenged them to the battle,— thirteen to three; and they took the odds gladly. Martineau answered them on his part in five lectures: The Bible, what it is and what it is not; The dogma that Christ is God proven to be false from the Bible; The scheme of Vicarious Redemption inconsistent with itself and with the Christian idea of salvation; The Christian view of moral evil; and Christianity without priest and without ritual. The lectures were printed, and Channing writes to his sister: "I have read all your brother's lectures. They seem to me to be among the noblest efforts of our time. They have quickened and instructed me. Indeed, these and Mr. Thom's give me a new hope for the cause of truth in England." And all we know besides is this: that, while no doubt the champions of the old faith felt sure they had won the day, no challenge to another combat has ever been given in Liverpool from that side; and I need hardly say none has been given from ours, save in the stead-

fast preaching of our gospel by the noble line of men who succeeded Dr. Martineau in the Hope Street church and the sister churches in that city.

An eminent minister in this city said some years ago that he thought short pastorates are a providential arrangement for the relief of sorely tried congregations; while we know it was not true of men like Henry Bellows, James Freeman Clarke, Cyrus Bartol, or in all the long pastorates of those we have known and loved,— that of my dear Father Furness, a ministry of seventy-two years, all told. And it was not true of our James, a servant of God, whose ministry in the church in Liverpool clasped twenty-five years to its heart, and was still sweet and welcome as the flowers in May, when he must needs leave them, to take charge of our college in London, and also of a church. Their sorrow, when he must leave them, is not to be told. The elder members would speak of it to me fourteen years after, when I preached there the first time, and, so far as I remember, have never failed to do this on any visit since then to my mother land. Nor can I do better here than to cite his own words to them in a sermon preached at the close of sixteen years, for evidence of its worth: —

"Nothing has been nearer my heart," he says, "than to substitute among you the religion of consciousness for the religion of custom. And it is a truth too plain to miss, that it is the business of religion to preside over our inner world, to rule the thoughts, to quiet the passions, and to elevate the will. It is also true that the condition of the inner world and life itself determines our religion; and as the affections are pure and deep, the conscience clear and strong, and the mind familiar with great and beautiful examples, are the heavenly realities discerned, while in the mind barren with selfishness the very roots are withered from which the blossoms of holy hope must spring.

"And until the soul attains some loftiness, by the free and faithful activity of her best powers, faith is not possible; but,

when she has come to this spirit and temper, misgivings will trouble her no more. Men rise then into the truth of God, as into a vision, denied to the lower level, and the sluggish soul. You must lift their feet upon the mountains, make them feel the wing of the upland air, and pass the cloud belt, that floats between earth and heaven, then they will discern the palace of the Infinite, and feel the silence of the Eternal."

Again, when the corner-stone of the noble new church was laid, nine years before he left them, he said: "This structure is not destined to interpose between the soul and God, but to bring them into intimate personal communion. We build a place not for the high altar, but for the humble heart, where the worship will not be *for* the people, but *by* them,— a place where the minister comes as a man among men, conscious of their frailties, their sorrows, their aspirations; and only through his partnership in these is he able to help them in preaching, and acknowledge them without pretense in prayer, by the sympathy of mind with mind and of heart to heart.

This is the keynote of his ministry through those twenty-five years, and then through all the years to the end; while to my own mind and heart the volumes entitled "Endeavors after the Christian Life" and "Hours of Thought on Sacred Things" contain the finest essence of his purely religious teaching, of which it has been well said: "In these sermons nothing repels you or divides. The appeal is to the deepest within us, and springs from a spiritual confidence in which we too confide. We do not question: we receive. The healing influence steals on us like the salt breath of the sea. We say this man knows our needs, spirit speaks to spirit, while at the same time he is manly and healthy, and in perfect harmony with human reason." And "England will be likely to see another Gladstone, Tennyson, Ruskin, or Arnold, before she sees another Martineau."

When he left Liverpool for London, he said to his old

friends and his flock: "Gain does not tempt me, for I go to a poorer life; or ambition, for I retire to one less conspicuous; or ease, for I commit myself to unsparing labor. And, of the unbounded freedom and confidence you have so nobly given me here, it is no secret to me that I must expect less, even though I should deserve more. But none of these things move me from the feeling that the work proposed to me is, of all things, that which I can best fulfil, and that, in being humanly offered, it is also providentially arranged."

And this was true. The old chapel, where he ministered through fourteen years, is hardly equal, as some of you know, to a New England meeting-house of the old tenor in a third-rate country town; while the church he must leave is one of the finest in Liverpool of any name.

There, Longfellow says in 1864, "I went to hear Martineau. He is refined and agreeable, and there is no great show of carriages at the door." This is all our good poet says; and the absence of carriages may be explained in part by a saying current among our people over there, that, when Unitarian families rise in the world and grow rich, the third generation is very apt to turn the heads of their carriage horses toward the doors of the Episcopal church.

It was a small chapel, and, as I have been told, seldom full. Frances Power Cobbe, a noble woman, as you know, and constant hearer, speaking of his ministry in London, says: "People, to our wonder, would come once or twice, and then no more. They expected, I think, to hear a sermon which would chime in with their own ideas, and went away sorrowful; for they had great *pre*-possessions. This was my own case for a time. We did not, of course, expect sermons like those of which Tennyson's Farmer, old style, says, 'I thowt a said whot a owt to 'a said, an' I comed awaäy.'

"We expected a later Luther, a soldier priest, a reformer, whose work was to sweep away old errors like the sands

of Egypt, and reveal a temple on the rock below. Dr. Martineau never seemed to want to win us to repeat any shibboleth after him or to forswear those of any other man, or of any church. Sometimes we even imagined that he read us an old sermon without remembering to bring its theology up to date,—the dear good hearers. But by degrees those of us who remained put aside our expectations of a teacher whose lessons could be formulated in a catechism; and then we found a companion like Bunyan's Great Heart for the celestial way, one with whose mind it was a joy and benediction to come into contact, even for an hour, and, returning home from such sermons, the home and the daily life fell into their true place. Care was minified, duty magnified, and affection strengthened and ennobled by a sympathy we felt to be divine and deathless.

"It was only when these sermons came to a sudden ending that we knew how much they had counted for us in our life. A window in our house was closed, like the window in the House Beautiful; and it looked toward the sun rising." And so, as you read these sermons and listen to this testimony from one of the noblest women of our time, you may well ask how it was that the small chapel in a by-street could hold his hearers through those fourteen years. To be sure, he was a branded heretic; but no such sermons had been heard in London since the times of Jeremy Taylor, nor do I think that even those of "the Shakespeare of divines" can match them in "the beauty of order, the nobility of tone, the chastened enthusiasm, and the charm of sincerity." I cite again from a secular journal.

And, as the magnet to the pole star, they are true to the stand he takes in Liverpool in his first sermon there, that the soul is the supreme seat of authority in religious truth.

And now James, a servant of God, is no more; but, humanly speaking, these sermons are forevermore, and I will not leave those out in which the theology seemed to be not quite up to date, to be, perhaps, of the day before yes-

terday, and not as Israel gathered the manna, pearled with the dew of that morning.

The living soul of the man is hidden in their heart; and I doubt not at all that, if we could gather into one congregation on some one Sunday those that hold them among their choicest treasures in this kind, and not alone of our own faith, but from the whole Church of the living God on the earth, there would be no temple built with hands ample enough to hold them.

But his ministry in the chapel was only one chapter in the life of our servant of God in London. The college we glanced at in York, with the small band of students, was moved to Manchester, and thence in the course of time to the metropolis; and there he must teach as he had been taught. So we must glance for a moment at his work as the head of the college, which like the church, so far as you count heads, was also of kin to the day of small things,— so small, indeed, that it gave birth one day to a gleam of humor,— rather rare, as I guess, in Dr. Martineau,— when, reading in Plato the passage where Socrates speaks of having spent his life talking philosophy to two or three boys in a corner, he remarked, "This must have been written with a prevision of our college." His students also remember gleams of wit and humor, when they brought their "efforts" for the master's judgment; and he said of one, "The whole duty of man in twenty minutes"; of another, in which the student had wandered away from his theme, "Very good, but I was waiting for the sermon"; and compared another to a diorama, which moved very fast, but had nobody to explain it; while another student said of the master, "He is a bad lecturer, for he makes you feel he is always right; but it stands to reason that he can't be *always*."

A small college, I said, but a peerless teacher, who won the hearts of the students, and then held them close to his own. My dear friend Brooke Herford, who won and held such an eminent place in Boston, says that in his first

student's year in Manchester he would often walk half-way to the town for a good look at the master's face, as he came to the college in the morning, and then turn into a side street and run ahead for another look, there was such an uplifting in that pure and noble countenance, and that strong confidence in the religion of the spirit the face alike and the word expressed. While many years after this Jowett says, "I met Martineau,—a noble face, that might have been worn by some mediæval monk."

Mr. Herford has paid a lovely tribute to his beloved master in a sermon you may have seen; and Mr. Cuckson, who succeeded Mr. Herford as minister of the eminent church in Boston, says: "Do you wonder that we reverenced and loved him? He helped us to understand the reality of God. He enabled us to find the rich deposit of truth in human nature, and led us to trust in our faculties as the appointed revealers of the truth and right. We welcomed with a deep gladness the teachings of one who clothed the essential truths of religion with a new power, established morality on no shifting basis, but on the immutable will of God, and harmonized Christianity with science and philosophy. His face never lost the upward look. He had the eye of a prophet and the inspiration of a poet, and his profound reverence for Jesus Christ was striking as it was beautiful." But I must hasten to a close. The great books which hold the living soul of the man for us down here went out to the ends of the earth. The masters in science, in philosophy, and in religious teaching, found in them a master who must be heard and heeded. I can only mention this because I have no fitness to enter into the story of the grand debate reaching through the many years; but a word from his pen in his last great book touches, as I think, the marrow of the truth, when he says: "Who could ever have imagined that religion could be hurt by the discoveries of science, had not Christianity been bound up in the physics of Moses and Paul, and looking with fresh eyes at the reality? And who would not

own that we live in a more glorious universe than they? That we live environed in a sublimer nature, we are conscious of a more sacred humanity, and own a wider providence in human history than was opened to our forefathers."

"Who would demand of a Darwin, Blot out your geologic time, and take us home again to the easy limits of six thousand years? And in the very hour of midnight prayer who would wish to look into heavens less deep or be near a God whose presence was the living chain of fewer ages?"

He said once in a public speech, The man who is a Unitarian, and dare not say so, is a coward and a sneak. And the faith which was only budding forth in the chapel and the home when he was born came to its blossom and fruitage in his life, so far prolonged; and his fame had gone out so far and wide that on his eighty-third birthday an address was presented to him, signed by six hundred representative men in England, Ireland, Scotland, Germany, France, Holland, and America, and in the list you find Tennyson, Browning, Jowett, Renan, Phillips Brooks, Max Müller, Lecky, Lowell, Lubbock, with many more, together with bishops of the Episcopal Church in England, eminent Scotch Presbyterians and sound English nonconformists,— a noble address, of which these are in part the words: —

"We desire to express to you on this birthday the reverence and affection entertained toward you, not only by your own communion, but by members of other Christian churches, who are acquainted with your character and works, and by many workers in other spheres than that to which your life has been devoted. You have taught your generation that there are truths above party, which cannot be overthrown; for their foundations are in the heart of man. You have shown that there may be an inward unity transcending the divisions of the Christian world, and that the charity and sympathy of Christians are not to be limited to those who bear the name of Christ."

This was the man with whom I sat for the space of half

an hour in the summer before last, when his long day's work as James, a servant of God, was done, and he was waiting in his Beulah, where the sun shineth always on the ripe of the river, until the shining ones came to bid him home; while I am so glad of the memory, as he was of the youth time, when he would leave the city with the living word in his heart for those who were waiting in the cottages to hear him, and so clasp in his happy remembrance for me the ministry of all the years.

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M. J. SAVAGE

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EDWARD A. HORTON

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THE IDEAL HOME

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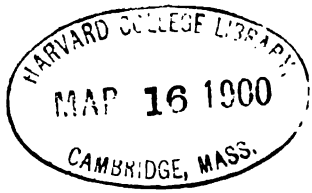

THE IDEAL HOME.

As a text, the appropriateness of which I trust you will see and appreciate, I have selected from the twenty-ninth chapter of Genesis the twentieth verse,—"And Jacob served seven years for Rachel, and they seemed unto him but a few days for the love he had to her."

Were the world full of happy homes, all other things could look out for themselves; for this one fact would indicate such a condition of intelligence and goodness as would show that men and women were competent to control and manage all other affairs. But, if we are to judge by the statements made by critics and zealous reformers every now and then, the world is very far from the condition indicated by these ideas. A man occupying a prominent position has recently told us that, in his judgment, most marriages are unhappy. And now I understand there is a committee at Albany attempting to introduce new legislation in the management of these matters, and telling us that the country is threatened with a flood of vice and immorality, and that everything is in danger of being washed away.

If I believed the supposed facts, so frequently set forth by zealous reformers as the reason for which they wish to engage our interest in attempting to attain some new thing, this belief would turn me precisely the other way. If I believed that after eighteen hundred years of Christianity the family is all going to pieces, why I should feel as though it were hopeless for me alone, or for a few of us, however zealous, to undertake to save it. If I believed that the world in any direction was getting worse, then I, for one, would give it up. I would seek out some quiet nook where

I could spend the remainder of my years in as much calm and peace as possible, and let the old world go; for it would indicate, it seems to me, that the Power that has lifted humanity to its present level was either losing his interest or losing his ability to manage affairs.

I believe nothing of the kind. I believe that the story that most marriages are unhappy, that the family life of the country is threatened by a flood of vice and immorality, is all wrong. I wish to warn you once again — I think I have done it before — of a danger that comes from the fact that the newspapers give us the morning news in such detail. I do not know that I am inclined to criticise the newspapers, or, if I am, I will not stop to do it now. I wish you to note what it is that constitutes a fact a piece of news. Is it not that it is something very exceptional, out of the ordinary,— not an illustration of a general rule or an average condition? And yet, as we read our morning papers, we are apt to drink in the spirit of pessimism which is abroad and which is cultivated by the detailed display of the evil of the world. One man yesterday did not behave himself: it is reported and published all over the world. A million people did behave themselves: that is not reported or published. Nobody thinks of making any comment on that fact.

Do you not see what that means? It means that the immense majority of people are leading true, noble, faithful, patient, industrious, sweet, clean lives. It is the exception that is noted: it is the commonplace that passes unnoted. So when you read of a divorce, when it is made so much of, the significance of that fact is not that divorces are increasing, not that the family life is threatened, but that it is so exceptional that people are intensely interested in it, perhaps keenly stirred by it, if it happens to be a divorce in high society; but the meaning of it is that the great majority of people are leading quiet, orderly, sweet, wholesome lives.

I do not believe, then, that we need any more legislation in this direction. But, if we are to have happy homes, we

must have first something approaching ideal marriages; and so, when I first began to think of my theme, I wondered if I should not have to precede a sermon on the Ideal Home by one on the Ideal Marriage. But I can hint enough in that direction for my practical purpose to-day.

Of course there must be the right kind of marriage if there is to be the right kind of home. And yet all the wisdom of the world has not up to the present time found any way of bettering the present arrangement of simply leaving the people alone to manage that matter for themselves. Nobody is wise enough to pick out two people and decide that they ought to marry: let the people decide that matter for themselves. In those countries where fathers and mothers have settled it from time immemorial, certainly conditions are not better than they are here in America with us. In those countries where family and property determine it, there is certainly no more happiness, certainly no truer unions, than we find among ourselves. If we should appoint a committee of judges and another of doctors to pass upon the matter, I believe they would only make a mess of it.

The simple fact that two people love each other is the strongest reason in all the world why they should marry. Of course, they sometimes make mistakes,— sometimes think they love each other, and find out afterwards they do not. But the world is not wise enough yet to be free from mistakes in any department of human life. So why should it be entirely free here?

It is better generally, I suppose, for men and women in a similar kind of society to marry each other; but there are plenty of cases where there are successful marriages without these conditions. They tell us it is better for a man to be something like five or ten years older than the woman, because the woman ages faster than the man; but a few of the happiest marriages I have ever known have been where the wife was years and years older than the husband, and

the possessor of no beauty whatever that any one except the husband could discover. They have been ideally happy. So I should not insist even upon that condition.

It is better, I suppose, that the husband and the wife should be at one in their religious and political ideas; but I have known some of the happiest marriages in the world where there was a lifelong divergence of views in these matters. So I do not know of any conditions to insist upon, except that the man and the woman think they love each other; and, when they do, I do not know of anybody on the wide earth that has a right to interfere. They will get advice enough; and I suppose no two people were ever engaged or ever married in the world without at least a great many of their wise friends being sure that they were mistaken. George William Curtis tells us, in one of his wise and witty essays, that no two people were ever engaged but their friends wondered what they could see in each other; and then he adds the quintessence of wisdom, "Just as though it is necessary that they should!" So long as they see it, that is all.

Now, if there is to be an ideal home or something approaching an ideal home, of course we should, if we might, have the externals everything that the heart could desire and the imagination could picture. No man ever loved a woman that he was not on his knees in worship; and no man in love with a woman ever knew of anything that was good enough for her,— house, furnishings, pictures, works of art, books, everything fair and fine should enshrine her if the lover could have his way. And yet all of us have known homes, sweet, true, beautiful, where the shell was of the commonest, where there were no carpets on the floor, few or no pictures on the walls, no statuary, no music, very few books,— none of the things that we would love to make the furnishings of an ideal home. So it is something else than any, or all of these, that, after all, is the creative power that makes the home.

I have taken for my theme the Ideal Home. I suppose not one exists on the face of the earth outside of our imaginings. The ideal,— what is it? It is the perfect,— the perfect so far as you and I can dream it. Your ideal may not be quite like mine; but my ideal includes everything I can dream that is sweet and fair, and so does yours everything you can dream of sweet and fair. Nothing exists that is ideal,— nothing we have ever known in our experience, at any rate. The utmost we can do is to see what we can accomplish in the way of approximating our ideals.

This is a theme so central to human life that it is always timely. All of us have lived in a home, or we are living in one now, or we hope to,— if not in this world, somewhere. Home is the universal dream and longing of the human heart. So it seems to me that we may possibly better things a little by considering some of those things which seem to us essential to it. There are some of us who have made our homes for better or worse for a good many years, and we think possibly it is too late to change in any very radical way; but perhaps we might better things a little even now by trying hard, if they are not to our mind. And to the young — those who are looking forward to homes and who are going to make homes — it seems to me to be of the utmost importance that they should consider most seriously and earnestly this on which the welfare of life depends more than on everything else, all things else put together.

What, then, are the essentials of the ideal home? I am to pronounce one word now which is so essential, so all-inclusive, that it will hardly bear talking about. If I should undertake to describe a day, I should not spend a great while in describing the sunlight, although there would be no day without the sunlight; and that would be the one essential, all-inclusive thing, so inclusive that we take it for granted. So the one great thing that constitutes a home, that has the power to create it, is love. And love is the only thing that makes marriage. I am so radical that I believe that a love,

a relation where perfect love is, is better than a relation that all the governments and all the religions of the world have recognized, if the love is not there. Love, and love alone, makes marriage. Love, and love alone, makes home.

And if I had time, and this were the place, I might express my opinion that there are worse calamities than to abolish the semblance and shell of a home when the thing itself is dead. It is love that makes home. But that is taken for granted.

There are certain other things subordinate to that which need to be considered. For a person may love, love passionately, love devotedly, and yet be selfish, be thoughtless, be inconsiderate, have a false philosophy of the relations of men and women, and so do anything but create an ideal home out of that love.

First, then, let me say it seems to me so unfortunate that in so many cases after the marriage the simple courtesies of the relation between the man and the woman should be neglected and laid one side. One of the most important things for the sweetness and happiness of home is courtesy. Why should a man be courteous, polite, thoughtful, go out of his way to render little offices to any woman that he meets at the house of a friend or that he passes in the street, or with whom he has some casual acquaintance, and yet forget all these in the presence of the woman that he loves best of all the world, merely because she is his wife? And yet thousands of times it is true that the husband forgets his politeness and courtesy after a while in dealing with his wife; and it is true, possibly, that sometimes the wife forgets the courtesy that is due to her husband. If men and women would only maintain these little courtesies and kindnesses and politenesses after marriage and year by year, they might find out why it is that honeymoons are sometimes of short duration.

Then there is another thing, We ought to cultivate the sympathetic imagination. There is no power on the face of

the earth more important for us to cultivate than the imaginative power, the power to realize the position of another, to put yourself in his place, so to speak,— this sympathetic imaginative faculty. To understand how another person feels who feels differently from yourself, how another person thinks, how another person looks at a thing that differs from your own way of thinking and looking, to get yourself out of yourself and into the position of another. Because the husband is another, the wife is another. You may have been joined in ever so indissoluble bonds; but you have been born differently, you have been trained and educated differently, your methods of feeling, thinking, looking at things, in a thousand ways are different. And fortunate it is you are; for you do not want a duplicate, an echo of yourself.

But, if there is to be an ideal home, there must be this ability to think yourself into the position of another, so that you can understand, comprehend, feel, sympathize, be just, be more than just, do to this other as you would like to be done by.

There is a little step ahead that I wish to take, carrying this idea a little farther. It is the same thought, in one way; but it differs radically enough, so that it needs to be clearly expressed by itself. The first time you go abroad perhaps you will say, What curious people these English are! You go to France, and you say, What odd ways and customs! You go to Italy, and you say, How peculiar the people's methods, their ways of looking at life, their ways of doing things! so different from what you have been accustomed to; and you think they are odd, they are queer. Did it ever occur to you that the Englishman and the Frenchman and the Italian are each — if they take the trouble — thinking that you are odd and queer, and that they have just as much right to maintain their point of view and pronounce you odd as you have to maintain your point of view and pronounce them odd?

In other words, you are not the norm, the standard by which everybody else is to be judged and approved or condemned. Now apply this principle in the home. Do not simply tolerate. I hate toleration. I resent it. I do not want to be tolerated. I want people to recognize my right to be myself, not merely get along with me. So, if there is to be any happiness, anything ideal in the home, I think that the husband and wife ought to learn to recognize the right of each other to be self,— not merely tolerate, not merely get along with their differences.

This leads us to one subject which I must deal with a little more at length, and which seems to me so important that I am not sure but it is everything,— everything in one. This one principle understood, conceded, applied, and everything else follows. And yet it seems to me that it is the last thing almost that people have been accustomed to think they ought to concede. I believe that there is no true, ideal marriage, no ideal home, without perfect liberty on the part of both the husband and the wife. One of the worst things in the married relation is that either the one or the other should feel the bond, feel the tie. No man wants to be ordered to do anything; and if he is, even if it is something he was just going to do, he feels like saying he won't. No man feels like being bound. I have seen two kittens on a rug asleep, so intertwined and blended together that it was almost impossible to tell where one kitten left off and the other began, happy as they could be in this closeness of relation. And yet if you should tie those two kittens together with a string, and they should find it out, they would scratch each other's eyes out.

The worst thing in the married relation is that either the husband or the wife should feel that they are tied, chafed by the thought of bonds. I cannot understand it. If my wife did not wish to stay with me, what should I do? I cannot understand this feeling of personal absorption, this jealousy which is the insanest thing on the face of the earth, the

most infernal fire that burns. A man loves a woman. He cannot make her happy. He cannot persuade her to love him in return. What does he do? If he is jealous, perhaps he will kill her, kill somebody else because she loves him, and kill his own heart and his own happiness in the process. If I really loved a woman, I should want her happy, somewhere else, if not with me. This insanity of thinking that I have a right to absorb the life of another by force! I think that, if husbands and wives when they first step over the threshold of home would remember that, though they are bound together, they are two people, and not one, and that they ought to be two people, and not one, two people in one, there would be a good deal better chance of happiness without any preliminary struggle or trial of unhappiness.

Suppose there are twin stars, as you know there are, swinging in the heavens. Would there be any gain in extinguishing the light of one of them? The glory and beauty is in the blending of the two without any diminution of either. The blending of the differences, the maintaining of the distinctions, and yet the harmonizing of them into one. That is what constitutes the ideal, it seems to me, in love.

I would, then, if I might, preach to every couple that I marry, Remember now that neither the husband has a right to absorb the wife, nor the wife a right to absorb the husband. Perfect liberty, liberty to expand,—and in what direction? Let me indicate a few. Let me take, because it is so simple and so common, and because, I believe, it has led to so much mistrust, one superficial thing, and get it out of the way. I think, for example,—I do not care how much they love each other,—that no husband on the face of the earth and no wife on the face of the earth ever had, or ever should have the right to break the seal of a letter belonging to the other. I would as soon commit a burglary as to open a letter that belongs to my wife. If there is

something in it that she wants me to know, she will tell me. If there is something she does not want me to know, if I trust her, I do not want to know it; and, if I do not trust her, marriage is at an end, and opening the letter will not help it any.

I think that all these things belonging to the personality should be sacred. What is the use of trying to hold by force? If I could not make my wife happy with me, I would do everything on the face of the earth to make her happy somewhere else. I should not better matters any by making her miserable. I should not make myself any happier. There is no use of cultivating this spirit of jealousy, of watching. If your wife wants to go astray, she will find some way of doing it. If the husband wants to go astray he will find some way of doing it. There is no use watching. When you have to preserve a thing by watching, it is not worth keeping, if it is a thing that touches love and the deep things of the heart.

Liberty, then, in the home,— liberty. Let me suggest it in regard to the person,— absolute control of the person by both the husband and the wife. Then liberty in regard to thinking, to studying, liberty to hold your own ideas; and I would extend this same liberty. I wish to make a point here that I may not have an opportunity to later. I would extend this same liberty of thought and this simple matter of courtesy to the children. If I could, I would not make my wife believe as I do, nor my child believe as I do; for an idea or an opinion that comes to one forced from the outside is not the person's idea or opinion at all. It must be freely evolved from within before it can be called a personal possession. My child, as he or she grows up and gets older, comes to look at the world from another point of view, to hold different theories, let it be in religion,— no matter where. I will converse freely, I will argue perhaps, I will try to explain my way of looking at things; but, if agreement cannot come in that natural way, then I would

have no agreement, but I would have a love that goes away down under all these superficial distinctions,— a love and a worship for the wife and the child that intellectually differs so deep, so sweet, so sacred that these things shall be only ripples on the surface of a sea deep as the heart of the world.

Husband and wife, it seems to me, should be free to choose their own avocations. Suppose a husband loves music, and the wife does not. Suppose he wishes to study it or cultivate it, or suppose it is in the opposite direction. Suppose that the wife wishes to study something, to pursue a career. Now there are certain duties, of course, which they owe to the home and to each other; but in all the life that lies beyond these limits let there be perfect liberty of thought and study and experience. And then, when they come together, do you not see that there will be something richer than a voice and an echo,— there will be two voices. You remember the old French king, in despair and disgust because his courtiers did not dare to have an opinion, saying once to one of them, "Do for heaven's sake say 'No' now and then, so I may know there are two of us." I feel that way in relation to husband and wife. Let us have two voices, and not one voice and an echo. Let us have each a developed and individual life, so far as possible; and then, when we come together on common ground, each shall make a rich contribution of beliefs and hopes and experiences to the other. Liberty, then, in all these different directions.

And if there is this love, this courtesy, this ability to put yourself in the place of the other, this liberty of thought and life all bound together and blended in one by a sympathy that is as deep and tender as the soul, then do you not see how rich and sweet and noble a place the home may be? And if you are to hold each other together at all, if the husband is to hold the wife, and the wife to hold the husband, it must be by these bonds of attraction, not by outside pressure. And the chances are that you will hold

each other a good deal better if you are cultivated and experienced in some different realms, so that there will be a little something of variety introduced into your lives, so you may not have the wearisome monotony of a tune played on one note and on one string.

Now homes like these, I said at the outset, are so essential and so central to the life of the people that, if you can have them, all other things will take care of themselves. This country is a republic. Let us have the home a little republic to start with,— republic of father and mother and children,— liberty to each and all, courtesy towards each and all, mutual trust of each in all, and the cultivation of the faculties which will be called out into active display in the midst of conditions like these are just the ones to make true men and women in the larger republic of the city, the county, the State, the nation, to fit people to play their part as the citizens of the world.

I have not dealt much, except by inference, with children in the home. Of course there must be children if there is to be an ideal home. I know homes so sweet and so tender where there are no children that one only keenly feels the one thing that is lacking; and, when I have got inside the confidence of the husband and wife, I have found generally that they felt and regretted the lack even more than their friends could possibly feel it. I say nothing against having a home where there can be no children; but neither the man nor the woman can be perfectly developed without parenthood, any more than a rose is perfect that has not blossomed or an apple-tree complete that has borne no fruit. It is the out-flowering, the consummation, of the nature of the man and the woman, that the child should come into their lives; and how many? The more the better, provided the health be not interfered with, provided the father and the mother are so situated that they can properly train and educate their children to play their part in human life.

And the children who have grown up in the midst of

homes like these, do they need much else to make them true and noble men and women? Is there anything else on the face of the earth that so insures nobility on the part of the grown men and women as their ability to look back and remember a home like that,— a father respected, a mother loved, reverenced, worshipped? Let such a father or such a mother become living images in the imaginations of the children, and there is a re-creative force in those remembered pictures that has power to reproduce the lives that are reverenced and loved and make them realized in the children.

Most children, I believe, if they are well born and well trained, will go right. Of course there are exceptions now and then. Some one, perhaps, has inherited a taint from some far-off ancestor forgotten, and the evil of a former generation comes out again; but as a tree well born and in good soil, with an opportunity, will generally grow straight and realize its kind, so a boy, well born, well trained, given a free opportunity, surrounded by an atmosphere of love and tenderness and truth, will grow straight and realize the type of his kind.

When boys and girls go wrong,— I would not say this as a general rule,— but it seems to me it is quite frequently a serious question as to whether there is not something wrong in the home. At any rate, you can count almost always on a boy or a girl who can remember a sweet and noble home like these which I have been trying in some rough shape to outline.

And I believe that the father and the mother should so appreciate the responsibility of being father and mother that they shall not exact too much from the children, not lay too heavy burdens on them. Let the children understand that they are not only the recipients of benefits, but that they bring benefits open-handed as they come from heaven, their home,— bring heaven and its beneficence along with them.

And I do not know how the rest of you feel about it; but

if one of my children should go astray, I should so question as to whether I was to blame that I could never be very hard. I could never shut the door, though my boy became a criminal, committed all the crimes in the calendar. If he crawled back from the very door of perdition, and had strength to knock at my door, I would open and let him in, and take him to my heart and pour out all the wealth of my patience and tenderness and care. There should always be one place open to a son or daughter of mine; and that should be my home and my heart. No matter where they had been or what they had done, I would try to illustrate the all-curative power of the love of the infinite Father. Such, seems to me, may be the power, such ought to be the welcome, of a home towards its children.

This kind of home is a dream to those who have ever experienced one,— a dream of happiness and peace that belongs to the past. I suppose nothing on earth will ever quite equal my own childhood's home; yet it was anything but attractive to a stranger, poor on the outside, poor on the inside. But the river that flowed out of the mystery among the hills and towards the skies of the north, the brook that flowed into the river, the hills that skirted its banks, the old house on the hill, the winds that fanned the boy's face, the birds that sung such wonder-songs to his childhood ears, playmates, most of whom are only memories,— these make a picture that no money could buy, and that has a power in it of comfort and sweetness and peace and rest forevermore.

I know my father and mother were not perfect; but they will always seem perfect to me. I only hope that my children may dream such dreams of me as I do of them. As the years go by, these memories become precious possessions. When we go to foreign lands, the best part of it all is getting home; and the song of that poet who never realized the meaning of his song has become one of the tenderest and most touching in all the world,—

" 'Mid pleasures and palaces though we may roam,
Be it ever so humble, there's no place like home."

If we could not have the home to think of and come back to, who would care much for travel, the stores of art, the wonders of architecture, the glories of other skies and seas? It is the little place that the heart loves, in the background, that adds to the wealth and beauty of all these experiences.

And then, somehow, as a sunrise now and then reflects itself in the west, and you see a double sunrise, so the home in the past reflects itself on the sky of the future; and it is home that we look forward to beyond the mists that skirt the farther edge of the horizon.

It is strange that, among all peoples almost, dying has been thought of as going home. Heaven is home; and that is what it means to those of us who believe that the figures we dream of in the past are not there, but have preceded us. It is a fact that these — the father and mother and brothers and sisters, the loved ones, the children, the wife, the husband, whoever it may be that has gone — have gone home, and are making a home; and we dream of it, and we will dream of it, and will expect it when our eyes grow dim and close in the darkness. We will believe that, as they open again, it will be to the sight of the welcoming arms and smiling faces of those who will cry, Home again at last!

Father, we thank Thee for these blessed memories and these dearer hopes. In the memory of these things may we consecrate ourselves to all loving, to all sympathy, all patience, all forgiveness, all help, all hope; and then by and by the hopes shall be realized, and we will be glad forevermore. Amen.

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BY

M. J. SAVAGE

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY E. A. HORTON

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INTRODUCTION.

The preface by Mr. Savage gives the reasons, clearly and concisely, why a book like this is needed. It answers a great demand, and it will supply a serious deficiency. Having had the privilege of reading the contents very thoroughly, I gladly record my satisfaction in the character of the work, my hope of its wide acceptance and use, my appreciation of the author's motives in preparing it. The questions and answers allow of supplementing, of individual handling, of personal direction. It is not a hard-and-fast production. There is a large liberty of detail, explanation, and unfolding. The doctrinal positions are in accord with rational religion and liberal Christianity, the critical judgments are based on modern scholarship, and the great aim throughout is to assist an inquirer or pupil to a positive, permanent faith. If any one finds comments and criticisms which at first sight seem needless, let it be remembered that a Unitarian catechism must give reasons, point out errors, and trace causes: it cannot simply dogmatize. I am sure that in the true use of this book great gains will come to our Sunday-schools, to searchers after truth, to our cause.

EDWARD A. HORTON

AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

This little Catechism has grown out of the needs of my own work. Fathers and mothers have said to me, "Our children are constantly asking us questions that we cannot answer." Perfectly natural! Their reading and study have not been such as to make them familiar with the results of critical scholarship. The great modern revolution of thought is bewildering. This is an attempt to make the path of ascertained truth a little plainer.

This is the call for help in the home. Besides this, a similar call has come from the Sunday-school. Multitudes of teachers have little time to ransack libraries and study large works. This is an attempt, then, to help them, by putting in their hands, in brief compass, the principal things believed by Unitarians concerning the greatest subject.

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MAR 22 19

SEVENTY-FIVE YEARS OF UNITARIANISM IN AMERICA.

I TAKE as a text from the eighth chapter of the Gospel according to John the thirty-second verse,— "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

To-morrow, the 19th of this month of March, this Church of the Messiah will be seventy-five years old. It has been a grief greater than I shall try to give utterance to that the condition of my health has been such as to make it impossible for me to arrange a series of meetings, of addresses, befitting the celebration of such an anniversary. The utmost I have been able to do is to plan to speak to you this morning on what I trust you will find an appropriate theme. I shall treat it, of course, only in the broadest and most general way. I wish to outline some of the principal characteristics of this century in its intellectual aspects, its social, its political, as bearing upon the opportunity for the religious life such as we Unitarians have attempted to express and live, and to hint to you some of the things which Unitarianism has accomplished, both within its own limits and on the larger bodies which environ it on every hand.

I have heard it said a great many times that Unitarianism is chiefly a protest, a revolt, a reaction against tyranny of thought in religion, against the holding and teaching of certain ideas which the human mind and the human heart in some directions has found itself unable to bear. This seems to me to be an idea of the origin of our denomination so inadequate as to be practically false, untrue. We have protested, we have revolted; but the protest and the revolt are only minor incidents. They are not the things which characterize the movement which we represent. Rather it

seems to me Unitarianism represents one of the most positive religious movements of all the world. It is a distinct and definite advance on the part of humanity, keeping step, as I believe, with the advance of the advancing God, up the ages towards that

> "one far-off, divine event
> To which the whole creation moves."

I wish to note now two or three main characteristics of this century, that you may see the conditions out of which this positive forward movement which we try inadequately to represent was born.

It is difficult for us, in spite of an occasional heresy trial here or there, to appreciate how very modern is our liberty of speech, liberty of conscience, liberty of printing,— that kind of liberty for which Milton so passionately argued, but which was not granted to the world in any large way until very much after his day. As I had occasion to suggest — I could do no more — two or three Sundays ago, there has never been a time until within a few years past when it has been safe for a man in Christendom to think, when it has been safe for him to utter his thought to his nearest bosom friend.

They talk to us sometimes about the voice of the ages, the consensus of beliefs of these Christian centuries. What is the voice of an age worth, what is a consensus of belief worth, that means that which is the result of outside force? Men have not dared to think on peril of excommunication, of being outcasts, peril of imprisonment, torture, death, peril of eternal torture in another world. These have been the penalties for thinking, for freedom. But at last,— the French Revolution marks perhaps roughly the time,— at last the world waked up, and demanded its right to think, and to speak freely of what it thought. That is the first great characteristic of this modern age that has given birth to the movement called Unitarianism. Men at last came of age intellectually, and asserted not only the right, but

they attained the power of free thought combined with personal safety. They can make it very uncomfortable for free thinkers still: certain denominations will have none of them, and invite them to go beyond their borders; but they can no longer apply the thumbscrew or the rack, they no longer imprison. (They did, however, even in Boston as late as Channing's day: do you know that?) They no longer imprison, they no longer put to death. They can threaten as much as they please the torments of the other world; but we can appeal to God, and not be afraid. This is the first characteristic, then, of the age that has given birth to our Unitarian movement.

The next is that men came of age so far as conscience and the sense of justice is concerned. Until a very modern time men have been taught on authority — the authority of God himself, as they have supposed — that their human standards of right and justice were of no avail in religion, in dealing with the thoughts and the ways of God. The world has been under the idea that might makes right, that kings could do no wrong, much more the eternal and universal King who sitteth on the circuit of the heavens. I grant that the divine King can do no wrong; but see the perversion of that idea that has made men afraid. Priests and churches and ecclesiastical councils have uttered their ideas of what was the proper thing for God to do, and have made that synonymous with the eternal right of God himself; have enthroned in the thought and the hearts of the world the idolatrous images of their own conceptions, and called them divine. And so men have not dared to question, even though the edicts of God himself, as they have been uttered by the priests and the churches, have seemed to them horrible and wrong. They have said, "They would be wrong for us." They are wrong according to human standards; but who is he that dares to reply against God? Who shall dare to question as to whether God may or may not have a perfect right to do as he pleases, even as the potter has power to mould

the clay, now to a vessel of honor, now to one of dishonor?

But at last men asserted the right to think in regard to questions of morality, of justice; and they said, "That can not be right up in heaven which is infamy here on earth." And they dared to say that the King of all the earth was under infinite obligation to be just, to do right, to be true, to be tender, measured by the highest of human standards. John Stuart Mill, only a few years ago, startled and shocked Christendom by saying that he would never call that right up in heaven which was wrong here among men, and, if as the penalty of so refusing he must go to hell, then to hell he would go. That was a magnificent declaration of the liberty of the conscience. See how modern it all is. It is coming to be a commonplace now; but it was only in the last or the present century that these ideas came to have vogue and free course in the minds and hearts of the people.

Then there is another characteristic that I wish to note. I can give utterance to it perhaps by quoting two or three lines of Whittier's as well as in any other way. Whittier had published a poem in which he gave utterance to such ideas of tenderness and love and divine compassion as seemed to his orthodox friends inconsistent with the creed which he professed; and they rebuked him for it. As a reply to this he wrote his famous poem, the greatest religious poem of all the world, I think, "The Eternal Goodness"; and in that he says:—

> "But still my human hands are weak
> To hold your iron creeds:
> Against the words ye bid me speak
> The heart within me pleads."

In other words, Whittier voices the feeling which was coming to be generally characteristic of the age, that the injustice and the cruelty of the old theology were no longer to be borne. It was becoming too heavy a weight for the human brain or the human heart.

Man, then, had come of age so far as freedom of thought was concerned, so far as liberty of conscience was concerned, and so far as tenderness of heart, or the dominance of humanitarian ideas, was concerned. These are the three great characteristics of the age that gave birth to Unitarianism, and the birth of Unitarianism is in accord with these ideas; and, in carrying out these thoughts and reconstructing the theological ideas of the world in accordance with them, Unitarianism has found its principal mission.

I wish now to note two or three great changes that have come over Unitarianism itself in the last seventy-five years,—changes that indicate a definite advance showing how Unitarianism has kept step with the scientific, the philosophical thought and growth of mankind.

When this Church was organized, it never occurred to Unitarian ministers, any more than among any other kind, to treat this Bible with the freedom of study and criticism which is characteristic of all liberal ministers, whether in the orthodox churches or out, to-day. Unitarians seventy-five years ago got their Unitarianism out of the Bible and built it on texts. They recognized or they conceded, rather, the supremacy of the Bible text as an authority; did it quite as much as did their brethren of the other churches. Only they interpreted the Bible differently from the ministers in these other churches. But there came at last, as the result of study, a deeper study, of the Scriptures a criticism touching the authorship and authenticity of Biblical books, the origin, the composition of the Bible. There came at last a verdict that delivered them from the bondage of text. Lucretia Mott, perhaps, has given as terse and fine expression to this thought as any one else. She said, "Truth for authority, not authority for truth."

In other words, in the old days the churches looked to tradition, looked to the priesthood, looked to ecclesiastical councils, looked to the letter of Biblical writings, as the source of authority, that which was to determine what was

true in religion, in ethics, in sociology, in science, in everything, so that it was really a very modern time before people were willing to concede that there might be anything even scientifically inaccurate in the letter of Scripture.

I can remember, when I was a young man, hearing it put forth as a very venturesome statement that the Bible was not intended to teach science, so, if it was not scientifically accurate, it was nothing against its infallibility as to religion and morals. But there came a time when the minds of men began to be free from the dominance of texts, even in morality and religion. In anti-slavery days it was found there were plenty of texts by which you could justify slavery, and men, even in orthodox churches, said slavery at any rate is wrong, and the text that justifies it must be wrong, also; and so they began to widen the extent of their study, and see that liberty would lead them beyond the bondage of texts.

We have come at last to feel that we are not bound by the texts of any book; that the one ultimate authority in religion, in ethics, is reason in the light of human experience, and that to this bar of reason in the light of experience must be brought all books or texts or institutions or traditions or organizations of every kind whatsoever. This is one of the great achievements of human liberty, which has marked the growth of Unitarianism.

There is another that is worthy of our notice. Seventy-five years ago, when this church was organized, I suppose there were no Unitarian ministers in America who questioned the miraculous,— none who doubted that the miracles recorded in the Bible were true. Perhaps there were some daring men who questioned as to whether the story of Jonah might be literally historic or whether the sun did stand still at the command of an old-time general, that he might have time to finish his battle, or as to whether an axe-head floated on the surface of the water at the request of a prophet. Some might doubt these stories

in the Old Testament; but it never occurred to them to doubt the miraculous stories of the New Testament.

But at last the question came to grow in men's minds as to whether the wonder of this great orderly universe were to be found more clearly in the order or in the supposed magical interference with that order. And it began to appear to men to be really more reverent, more religious, more worthy of God, of the religious life, to believe that God did not contradict himself; that, after establishing a perfect divine universe, he would not be likely to interfere with its working. And, when they began to see that similar stories of interference were told in all religions and in all ages, and with equal authority for them all, they began to doubt seriously as to whether they had any right to make an exception of such stories, even as recorded by the writers of the New Testament. And so the miraculous disappeared from the minds of free and earnest religious men; and they began to find God in the magnificent order of this universe and in the growth of humanity on earth.

Another great change came. That which marked it more emphatically and clearly than anything else was the birth of the science and philosophy of evolution. What did that mean? It marked the turning-point of all the ages, in man's conception of God and his relation to his world. Up to that time, in all the religions of the past, God, or the gods, had been looked upon as beings outside of nature; as having at some particular time created the earth and the sun and the moon and the stars; as having instituted this mechanism, and set it going as something quite apart from himself. This has been the universal thought as to the origin of the world and the relation of God to his world. But there has gradually come into the mind of the modern world — and this is since our Unitarianism was born — the thought that God is not to be found outside the universe; that there never was a time when he lived in empty space; when he waked up, and said, "Go to, I will create some-

thing"; and when he made the worlds out of nothing; when he said, "Let there be light, and let the sun appear, and let the earth take shape, and let the waters be divided from the land, and let living creatures appear in the waters and on the land and in the air."

All that thought quietly fades away and becomes a part of the old-time wonder-story and tradition of the child world; and instead of that we see a universe that has always existed. Matter, we know not what it is,— something doubtless as eternal as God. There never was a time when nothing was except God. God has eternally expressed himself; and the universe is merely the unfolding, the orderly, the awful unfolding of the thought and the life of God, and God is to be found in the universe, and not outside of it. He is to be found as the thought, the heart, the life of things, as man is to be found, if found anywhere, inside his body, which is only the clothing and expression of his life.

So this thought of God has unfolded, growing, manifesting itself through the ages. It has come to take the place of the old arbitrary and mechanical ideas. And do you not see what a tremendous revolution and reconstruction of theological theory and religious belief is compelled by this? Compelled, I say, because this is no guess-work: this is demonstrated truth,— truth which, in spite of variations as regards minor matters, no competent thinker on the face of the earth to-day questions. And in the face of it all the old theological ideas fade and pass away. There is not one of the old doctrines that can stand, that can find place at last in the presence of this demonstrated truth concerning the nature of the universe in which we live. There is no place in it for any Fall of Man. There is no place in it for any Wrath of God. There is no place in it for any Substituted Atonement. There is no place in it for an external and imposed moral law. There is no place in it for a religion imported from without. There is no place in it for

Eternal Torment. These things must pass away. It will be slow. All the highest and finest thought of the world comes slowly. But it is as certain as that the sun will rise to-morrow, because it is the demonstrated truth of God; and it becomes merely a question of time as to when the world will rouse and think broadly, clearly, deeply enough to comprehend and accept.

Religion, then, becomes, as Unitarians teach it, a natural thing. It is finding out the laws and the life of God, and coming into accord with them,— that is all. Morality is not something instituted arbitrarily, a law imposed on people. It is simply the living out of the law embodied in them. Punishment can no longer be an outside and arbitrary infliction. It is a necessary and eternal result; and salvation can no longer be a thing of arbitrary appointment of place and time. It is a matter of being. It is character, and it can be nothing else.

These as hints as to some of the results of the changed thoughts and ideas that have marked the growth of Unitarianism since it was born.

I suppose that seventy-five years ago the leading Unitarians of the country expected a much more rapid growth of Unitarianism than it appears to have attained. Louis Kossuth, the great Hungarian liberator, said to a friend not long before his death that, in his judgment, the Unitarian faith was the only faith that had any future. Thomas Jefferson, after hearing a sermon by Channing, said that he hoped that there was not a young man then alive in the United States who would not die a Unitarian. I speak of these merely as indicating some of the hopes that animated the leaders of the movement at that time.

It is extraordinary to note what men have been swayed, influenced, by this Unitarian thought and life. At least three of our not very long list of Presidents were out-and-out Unitarians. Two others, one of them Thomas Jefferson, though not living where there was any Unitarian church,

was in such complete sympathy with it as to express himself in the way which I have just quoted. Supreme Court judges, men distinguished in the conduct of affairs, such a roll of philanthropists as perhaps you will hardly find on the list of adherents of any other faith, all the great, distinguished poets and literary men, almost all of them who are known all over this country and abroad, avowed Unitarians. Such a list, I say, as can hardly be found on the rolls of the membership of any other denomination — of men distinguished for character, for intelligence, for culture, for brain power, for literary and artistic activity — are Unitarians. And yet, with all this promise and all this widespread hope, Unitarianism as an organized body is still comparatively small.

Why is this? I have not time to go into the matter very deeply this morning. I wish simply to suggest that at the time of the French Revolution the great enthusiasts for human liberty at that day thoroughly believed that their ideas were going to sweep the earth, and that monarchy and tyranny of every kind would pass out of existence in at least fifty or a hundred years. And yet it has been proved by experience that liberty combined with social and political order is the highest and most difficult achievement of the human race. I have not time to go into the philosophy of this, and explain as to why it is so, as could easily be done.

So we have found out that liberty of thought, liberty in religion, as it is the highest, is one of the most difficult achievements of the world. Tradition, theory, custom, your environment,— a thousand things interfere. And, then, so few people think,— so few people think,— so few people think enough to have any ideas of their own — not any, some of them.

But Unitarianism has had a wonderful growth in spite of these things. It has become a power in this country and on the continent of Europe quite equal to that which its rational friends had any right to expect. It has not become

great as an organization, and one grand reason for this is that its leaders at the outset fought against the idea of its ever becoming a sect. Channing, for instance, in this country, Martineau abroad, and their compeers generally,—all of them opposed the organization of another denomination. They believed that the ideas which they had espoused were gradually to spread like the light when the dawn is in the east, and that they were to permeate, characterize, and transform all the churches. This was the ideal which they set before them rather than the organization of another church with another name.

That the Unitarian Church did come into existence as a separate organization, and that its name was flung at it as a nickname, as in the case of many other denominations, was by what appeared to be accident.

I wish, however, to notice that Unitarianism has had a power and an influence, just as Channing and Martineau desired, beyond its limits, and that its triumphs have been found in other denominations where it is looked upon with scant welcome, perhaps even with positive suspicion and dislike. Shall I say it has changed the theological climate throughout Christendom? Perhaps not quite that. I wish to make my statement as modest as it can possibly be; that is, I wish to make it simply true. I do not believe that Unitarianism has done it all, because ultimately it is God who has done it all, and who has transformed Unitarianism; and God who, perhaps by means of Unitarianism as one of his aids, has transformed the other forms of religious thought and life all around us.

Suppose there is a fleet of ships at sea. One of them recognizes an ocean current on which they are all floating, and believes in the direction in which that current is drifting them. It frankly accepts the idea. It hoists its flag and is proud of the fact, and glad of it, and puts on all steam, and attempts to do all it can to help on these natural forces which are moving it in a certain direction. The other ships

of the fleet are afraid to go in that direction at all. Perhaps their prows are pointing towards other points of the compass, and their sails are up, and they are trying to go contrary to the current. But it is God's own current which is under them all, sweeping them all along in the direction towards which it is tending.

Unitarianism is the one ship in the great theological fleet to recognize this divine current, to be glad of it, and help it on. The others are being swept on by the same current which is moving the Unitarian ship, but largely without their knowledge, perhaps, or against their will. It is not the Unitarian ship which is moving all the rest of the fleet: it is God who is moving them all.

Though I would not make too great a claim for Unitarianism, I believe it has exercised a tremendous influence by standing for its ideas, by being bold and frank and free, by expressing and teaching these great natural truths,— the divineness of the religious and moral life, the naturalness of them; but it has not done it all. Certain great things are going on. And I wish to note some of the changes that have taken place in the other denominations in a line with Unitarian advance, so you can see what is the prospect of both for the future.

I need not go back quite seventy-five years. Perhaps it will make it quite as forcible if I tell you of certain changes within the limits of my own life.

When I was a boy, nobody ever thought of questioning — nobody in any region of country where I lived — the historical accuracy of the story of the fall of man. Now, even in most of the orthodox churches, it is treated only as poetry or an allegory. I received a letter from a man recently who asked me if I did not think it was simply a poetical representation of what takes place in every man's life, how he begins it in innocence and wakes up to the consciousness of wrong, into which he falls, after all to recover himself as he goes on. It is treated in hardly any of the

churches to-day as a real historical fact. And yet it is so recited in all the creeds. And, if it is not an historical fact, then there is no reason for the existence of the theological schemes of the world. But belief in its historical accuracy is passing away, even in our lifetime.

Take the doctrine of Total Depravity. It is very rarely preached in any of the churches in this part of the country, but, when I was in my theological school, I was taught it in the most explicit way. I was taught plainly that no man, however good, unless he had been specially and miraculously converted by the spirit of God, could possibly do a right thing. I was taught as a young minister, and was expected to go out and preach it myself, that natural goodness was all wrong, that a man was unable to do a good thing until he had been converted. This conception of human nature is almost never heard of or preached in the great pulpits of Christendom to-day.

Take the doctrine of the Trinity. It is in all the creeds; but, as I talk with ministers, I find that the old conception of the Trinity is passing. The humanity of God is coming to be recognized, and the divinity of man as a son of God. Dr. Lyman Abbott, for example, has been telling his people for years that he recognizes no distinction in kind between God and man. God is simply man plus infinity, and man is God minus infinity. And there is no difference in nature, he says, between God and Jesus and man, merely a difference of degree.

So I talk with men; and I find that their conception of the Trinity, of the nature of Jesus, is very largely what the Unitarian conception of it was seventy-five years ago. I had a letter from a prominent Methodist clergyman within a week or two, in which he says he simply holds in some way — he does not know how — that God was in Christ. Unitarians believe that.

And so you will find that the doctrine of a substituted atonement is almost never preached to-day. Jesus was not

sacrificed necessarily to appease the wrath of an angry God. That is the old doctrine, which has almost entirely passed away. Jesus, his consecrated life and his heroic death, is preached in nearly all the pulpits simply as a manifestation of the tenderness and love of God; and he is held up to us as a human example instead of a divine sacrifice.

I can remember what a battle Horace Bushnell, of Hartford, made for this moral theory of the atonement, which was almost universally rejected in the orthodox churches. But the old is passing. When I was a boy, the great revivalists preached wrath almost exclusively, preached hell and fire; but Moody, the prince of them all in the modern world, devoted himself almost entirely to pleading the love and tenderness and mercy and forgiveness of God. I speak of this merely as indicating the change which has passed over the world.

The doctrine of eternal hell is almost passed out of existence. St. George Mivart startled the world a few years ago by an article in one of the foremost English magazines, entitled "Happiness in Hell," in which he wrought out the idea that hell was not such a very bad place, after all. The people there did not enjoy the beatific vision, but they found a very comfortable place after its kind. Not the highest. They were deprived of a good deal. All the old features of the old-time place of torment were entirely gone. He wrote this as a Catholic at that time.

Many of the ministers in our great churches are, frankly, Universalists. Many of them occupy the position of Dr. Abbott. He has published recently, as he told me in conversation years ago, that he believed that God would save every single soul that he could save. The only limit that he recognized lay in the possible fact that man, as the possessor of free will, might, if he chose, defy and oppose God forever; but he believed God would save every soul that he could.

Contrast that, if you please, with the saying of Dr.

Gardner Spring, the famous preacher who preceded Dr. Van Dyke at the Brick Church. When some one asked him one day — and he had been preaching on how few there were that would be saved — why it was that God saved so few, he replied curtly that he supposed God saved just as many as he wanted to; and that ended the discussion. That is the old idea. All those things are passing away.

As I said, the theological climate is changing, and the old creeds that were hard and hopeless and cruel are rapidly fading away from the real belief and the daily and weekly lips of those that are supposed by their positions still to defend the antique conception of God and man and destiny. Unitarianism has not done all this, but, thank God, it has seen it done; it has led the way; it has proclaimed the truth; it has clearly accepted this leadership of God into the higher and nobler and fairer and gentler ways. It believes in the humanity of God; it believes in the divinity of man; it believes in the naturalness of goodness; it believes in salvation by character; it believes that punishment must follow law-breaking, as shadow in the sunlight follows substance, just as long as law-breaking continues in this world or any other; but that it is not punishment, in the old sense, but necessary result. It believes that happiness, that heaven, must come to all true souls, they who consecrate themselves to God and their fellow-men, whether in this world or in any other world. And so Unitarianism is the leader and exemplar in this direction.

And to what at the end of the seventy-five years of this Church of the Messiah do we look forward? I do not expect any rapid enlargement of our Unitarian boundaries. One thing, if I had time to go into it, is enough to preclude this expectation. The mere fact that Unitarian ideas, ideals, hopes, are being so generally accepted on the part of the other churches,— this fact itself stands in the way of the organization of Unitarian churches more than all the opposition of

the world could do, because the people that are filling these other churches and hearing this other preaching feel no longer the need of going out after the doctrines which they find plentifully dispensed to them at home.

But I do expect, if Unitarianism does not survive under its own name and become the greatest church in all the world,— I do expect to see its ideas permeate more and more the other religious organizations, characterize more and more the utterance of the other religious teachers, until it shall come at last to that triumph which certainly belongs to it,— that triumph of being accepted by the intelligence, the conscience, the heart of the world.

This triumph is just as certain as is the promise of sunrise to-morrow. When Galileo, looking through his little glasses, discovered the moons of Jupiter, that meant that the old system of astronomy was dead, and a new one must take its place; and, though it took hundreds of years for the transformation to come, come it must, because compelled by the truth of things, the truth of God.

So, though it take a thousand years to permeate and re-create the old churches of Christendom, even the Catholic Church itself must submit to it and become transformed at last, because the ideas for which Unitarianism stands are the demonstrated truth of the universe of God.

So let us be patient, let us be hopeful, let us consecrate ourselves afresh and anew, and let us be self-sacrificing; and if our triumph means that we must play simply the part of the morning star, which is absorbed in the light, and loses its apparent identity when the morning comes, even then we will be glad of the triumph of the light and the love and the truth for which we stand.

Father, we consecrate ourselves anew this morning to this revelation of Thine,— this light, this love, this salvation. And we ask that we may be faithful, whether with few or with many, knowing that he who has God for his helper is secure. Amen.

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THE SAINTS.

My text — it may as well have been taken from any one of several other places — may be found in the first chapter of the Epistle of Paul to the Romans, the seventh verse,— "Called to be saints."

When we hear a person spoken of as a saint, we are accustomed to think that he or she must be extraordinarily good. This is the sense in which we have come to use the word. And, indeed, if a person be sainted or consecrated or set apart to the service of the noblest and highest ideals, — that is, if a person be the right kind of a saint,— he will be good.

But it is worth our notice that this is not the original or New Testament sense of the word. We shall get, maybe, light on the subject if we note a fact like this: Nearly all of Paul's Epistles address the members of the churches to which he is writing as "saints," collectively, and without any special discrimination. He does not pick out the best ones in these churches and call them "saints," applying some other epithet to the commoner class of Christians. He calls them all "saints." And, then, he goes on to find the most serious kind of fault with a great many of them. He finds fault, for example, with some of the churches for abusing the Lord's Supper to the extent of getting drunk at the communion table. He talks of dissensions and discords. He rebukes them because some of them are trying to get the first places, the places of honor and position in the church. He rebukes them for their worldliness and conformity; charges them, indeed, with such offences in some cases as

would make them ineligible to church membership at all at the present time. And yet he calls them all "saints."

What does it mean? We need to get at the principle underlying this; for I think we shall find it not only very suggestive, but very instructive as well.

The word in the Old Testament which is translated "saint" and the word in the New also — for they mean substantially the same — does not have anything to do whatever with the character possessed by the person so called. It means simply that it is a person, or indeed it may be a thing, which is separated from common use, which is set apart, consecrated in some special way, ordinarily of course to the service of God; though, as we shall find before we are through, there have been saints in all the religions, and so consecration may be to one kind of a god or another according to the religion of the age or the people with which we are dealing.

We find in the Old Testament, for example, and it is also true in the New, that things, places, times, can be sainted. In the old Jewish worship the altar, the implements used in sacrifice, the candlesticks, the snuffers,— whatever was a part of the ceremonial service,— all these were sainted or set apart, consecrated to this particular use. Days are sainted, places, shrines. Temples are sainted, set apart, consecrated.

But you will notice one important principle dividing the things that are sainted from the people that are sainted. The consecration of a thing does not change the nature of that thing, only changes the use of it. The altar was made of common stone, and it was called consecrated; but no change had been wrought in the stones themselves No change had been wrought in any of the implements used in sacrifice in Solomon's Temple. The day that had been set apart as a holy day, a sainted, consecrated day, so far as anybody could see, was precisely like any other day. If we should forget Sunday when it came, for example, there

would be nothing about the sunshine or the air or the quality of the day itself to make us think of it. No change has passed over these. The materials of which this church is composed are precisely the same as they were before they were consecrated. It is human association, human thought, human feeling, human emotion, that consecrate and make sacred places and times and things.

But here is this important difference when we come to deal with people. If a person has been set apart, consecrated to the service of any particular being, to the pursuit of any special ideal, to the following out of any particular aim in life, then there immediately begins a work of transformation in that person. His thoughts, his emotions, his purposes, become changed; and, progressively, the person's character is touched, permeated by the new thought and purpose. If he is consecrated to something beneath himself, he gradually becomes degraded. If he is consecrated to something above himself, he gradually becomes lifted and ennobled. So that it becomes a very important matter, indeed, to the person, as to what he is set apart for,— what kind of a saint he becomes. He may be a very imperfect man at the beginning; but suppose he is consecrated to a true, noble and unselfish life. Suppose the ideal of Jesus, the son of God and the son of man, our brother, the one who went about doing good, who made himself of no reputation, who loved God with all his heart and soul and mind and strength, and who loved his fellow-men as himself, who cared not for riches except as he could make them of service to his fellow-men, who did not care for honor, for anything personal to himself and apart from the welfare of his fellows,— suppose a man becomes sainted or consecrated to Jesus,— this ideal of Jesus of which I have been hinting. Do you not see that he may be a very imperfect man? He may be like one of those that Paul speaks of who drank too much at the communion table. He may be overweighted with personal ambition, to begin with; may

care very much for honor. He may love wealth and power, he may be brimful of passion, which is hard for him to repress or control. He may be a very imperfect, common man; but, if he really saints or consecrates himself to this ideal of Jesus that I have spoken of, do you not see how inevitably the evils of his nature begin to disappear, and he becomes transformed, made over into the image, the likeness of that which he loves, which he learns to admire, and to which he consecrates his thought and his feeling and his heart and his strength and his effort?

All religions have had their saints; and you will notice the principle that I have just hinted at, that determines that the saint shall take on the likeness of the God or of the ideal to which he is consecrated. So there will surely be a good many saints at some periods in the history of the world which we cannot admire. For example, suppose you should visit India. There is very little of it going on now, thanks to the English occupation of that country; but there used to be the worship of a god Siva, the god of destruction, death. And the man who consecrated himself especially to Siva has become familiar to you, at least by name, though you may have hardly thought to associate an act of worship with his deed. He was the Thug; the man whose business it was to murder as a religious act; to entice any one he could get control of away somewhere from his friends and into his control, and put him to death, because he was a saint, consecrated to this act of death and destruction.

If you should go among some of the North American Indians of the older time, you would find the Medicine Man, the Rain Maker, the man who believed that the air all round us was full of spirits who had control of atmospheric conditions, and who believed that he, in collusion with them, and by the use of magical powers with which he had become acquainted, changed the weather to suit the wants and wishes of the tribe. So this man be-

comes the saint of his people,— not one that we should respect very much to-day or that we should ever think of looking up to as worthy of our admiration or imitation.

Had you visited Mexico at the time of the Spanish conquest of that city, you would have found that the chief saint of the great popular religion was a man whose hands were dripping with the blood of sacrifices. The people made wars for the express purpose of obtaining captives to be put to death in honor of their god, who demanded so many lives in such and such a period of time; and the saint was the man who stood at the altar and sacrificed his fellow-men.

And so according to the conception of the religion do you find the idea of the consecrated life, the man who is devoted to the service of his God. There were saints in ancient Greece, saints in ancient Rome. Alexander, for example, it is said, used to carry with him everywhere on his campaigns a copy of Homer's Iliad, because the ideal saint to him of all the world was Achilles, the fighter, the mighty warrior; and this admiration dominated the life of Alexander, and shaped him very largely to what he was.

In ancient Rome there were the saints dedicated to purity, the women whose business it was to keep forever burning the sacred fire; and they stand to us as emblems of chastity and clean, sweet life. But they had other deities than Vesta; and so we find the Bacchanals equally engaged in religious ceremonies when they were celebrating some drunken orgie. Thus we have all these different kinds of consecration; and the people's characters are shaped by the things to which they are thus set apart.

When we come to Paul, we do not find in the New Testament that he is called "Saint Paul." He is simply Saul at first who persecuted the Christians. Then he becomes converted to Christianity and becomes "Paul," the apostle, the missionary, travelling all over the then known world for the purpose of founding churches in honor of the Master whose

name at first he had despised, Paul set apart to this tireless labor of travel and preaching and founding and building. Sometimes we think of him as hard and cruel. We are accustomed to read some of his ideas perhaps with scant appreciation to-day. Many liberals have come to look upon him as the foundation head of the old, hard Calvinistic theology which they have put aside. And yet, if there is any man in all the history of the world that deserves the title of "Saint," it is this same Paul. Not because he thought he was good. He tells us that he counted himself to be the very chief of sinners, found all sorts of fault with himself. He never forgave himself for persecuting the Lord's people and this new Gospel which he came afterwards to so passionately love; and he says towards the end of his life, "I count not myself to have apprehended,"—that is, not to have obtained. I am striving towards the ever-flying goal, one that eludes me and seems forever distant. But he presses towards the mark. This is the man who has come to be Saint Paul; and, as I said, if there is any man in the history of the world who deserves the title, he is the man. A life magnificently consecrated.

And let us remember — we who are liberals — that Paul was the great shining radical of his age, the great liberator of the first century, the man without whose services probably we should have had no Christianity at all, the man who broke down all the old Jewish barriers, the man who gave the light of the gospel to the world. This is Paul.

But in the early ages of Christianity, after Paul had disappeared, we find for a time the type of sainthood degenerating. It was a common thought in the Orient — and these ideas have frequently come from the East — that there is something inherently wrong and vile in matter. I never could quite understand how; but every little while a new school of thought is coming up and running its little race that condemns matter as somehow essentially wrong, telling

us that spirit is the only good thing in the world. And some of these old Spiritualists, if I may use the word in that sense, carried their teaching so far as to believe that God could not have had anything to do with matter at all, that there was some sub-deity delegated for the purpose of creating the world and man; and they made it the chief work of their lives to condemn matter, these bodies of ours as essentially and inherently wrong.

And so we find any number of the early saints making it their chief business to abuse the body. Simeon Stylites, it is said, stood for years on a pillar, doing everything he could to torment himself. There were saints who called themselves athletes, spiritual athletes, because they were trying perpetually to outdo each other in self-torment, in the abuse they were heaping upon the body; saints who went off and lived in caves, starving themselves, who stood for hours and hours, perhaps, engaged in prayer, while it snowed or rained, or in bitter cold. They did everything they could think of in the way of self-torment, thinking thus they were winning for themselves a halo of sainthood, making themselves especially holy, abusing the most wonderful work of God with which we are acquainted, and thinking thus they were honoring God.

If we should visit India, we should find to-day saints who would repel us at every turn, men who go off into the jungle, who do not wash themselves or cut their nails or comb their hair for years, thinking that thus they win exceeding great merit and gain some sort of magical power over the invisible deities, until at last it is said that the gods send to them all sorts of temptations, because they get afraid of their power, such strength do they win by their consecration to these miserable ideas.

The Buddhist saints are beggars, just as so many were in the Middle Ages. They go from hamlet to hamlet, from house to house, simply with their one robe, and a bowl in their hands, in which they beg rice enough to keep them alive; and thus they consecrate themselves to their ideal.

Now what is the ideal of this kind of sainthood? What is the particular thing for which they are living? They are trying to win for themselves special merit, some high lofty place in the other life,— trying, in other words, to save their souls. They are good only in this selfish and contemptible sense. They were not aware of the point of view which we must take to-day, and look down upon them: they supposed that they were living the noblest kind of life. But have we not come to the conclusion at last in this modern world of ours that it is not enough simply to be good? Negative goodness is a very poor thing on which to plume one's self. The mere fact that you have never done any wrong is not of any great value. The man who can simply say that he has gone through the world and harmed nobody is in great danger by making that claim of asserting, whether he means it or not, that he never has done anything. The man who does anything in the world is pretty certain to rub hard against somebody, hurt somebody's feelings, perhaps incidentally do harm to somebody. There is no special virtue merely in this negative goodness.

And I have no very high respect for the man who spends the main part of his life in the work of saving his soul. I have a serious question as to whether a soul of that sort is worth all the trouble. A man saves his soul in the noblest and truest and highest sense of the word who forgets whether he has any in the consecration of his life to some positive service of his fellow-men. So the old idea of merely being good is coming gradually to be superseded by the idea that a man must be good *for something*,— not merely be good, but be positively good in the way of service to his kind.

Let us illustrate the point that I have in mind by a case like that of Wilberforce. I think the story is told of him, who was one of the greatest and most celebrated philanthropists of his day, and had given his life to the service of his fellow-man. Some zealous religionist came and asked him

one day if he was sure that his soul was saved. He started, waked up, and looked at him a moment, and said, "Really, I had forgotten that I had any soul: I have been too busy with other things to trouble about a question like that."

Now, if a man is too busy over the wrong kind of sainthood, if he is consecrating his life to something that belittles and damages his soul, then it is well for him to wake up and find his soul is in danger, and to the more important fact that the life he is leading is endangering the souls of other people. Your soul is important; but the souls of the hundred people that you are either helping or harming are a good deal more important.

So we must come at last to recognize this other kind of sainthood,— the kind of sainthood that is consecrated to the service of the world. Let me illustrate by calling your attention to two or three people to see what I mean.

Take that lovely, consecrated Unitarian saint, Dorothea Dix. She spent her life, her time, her money, her energies, her sympathy, in travelling from State to State in this country, North and South and East and West, in the work of laboring for the inmates of the asylums for the insane, giving herself to the endeavor to inaugurate saner and more humane methods of dealing with these unfortunate people, — a life given thus to the service of her fellow-men.

Take that other Unitarian saint, Miss Clara Barton, who has devoted herself for years to the sanitary relief of the suffering, to the battlefields, to the hospitals, to those who are suffering at every turn in the great inevitable conflicts of nations. We may bewail the fact as much as we please; but we cannot prevent the existence of these terrific wars. Blessed, then, are those who, like Florence Nightingale, Clara Barton, Mary A. Livermore, and thousands and thousands of their sisters, give themselves to the care of those who are suffering, to bind up their wounds.

We are not accustomed to think of him perhaps as a

saint; but I enroll high on my list Walt Whitman. Let me give you one illustration of the practical kind of sainthood the man was capable of. Is there anybody in New York since his death, occupying a similar position, who would do a thing like this? He loved to ride with the driver on the stages that used to travel up and down Broadway; and one winter it was found that he was driving a stage himself, week after week and month after month. And when some one inquired as to what the cause of this thing was, that a poet, a man who did not need to do it for self-support, should be driving a Broadway stage,— they wondered whether it was a whim, a fancy of his in order to get the experience,— they found that the old driver with whom Walt Whitman had driven for weeks at a time, and who had become an old acquaintance and friend, was sick; and so he takes the box and the reins, and drives for him, and turns the wages over to his family, simply that he may render him this kind of human service.

That is the kind of consecration to the needs and welfare of others that makes a man a saint after the ideals of the modern world. Then take him in the hospitals at Washington. I do not single him out because I have special admiration for him. I only take him as a type. He devoted himself to the sick and dying in the hospitals during the Civil War until he ruined his own health past repair, and died prematurely on account of it. And what did he do? He was no physician. He did not pray with the sick, he was no clergyman. He was simply their friend. He came to be known in all the hospitals throughout the city and the regions round about the city. He would go and sit down at the side of some poor fellow who was sick and listen, let him tell his story. If he was dying, he would stoop down, and catch his last whispered message for his mother or his sweetheart or some one he would never see again; or he would write a letter for him who was not able to write letters any more for himself; or he would take the poor little

keepsakes, the package of letters, or something he had carried about with him during the campaign. He would take the direction, and find out to whom he wanted them delivered, and see that they were sent to their proper destination. He consecrated himself thus to be sunshine, sympathy, comfort, help, to the sick and the dying.

Take a man like him, for example, and place him beside Simeon Stylites, standing for years on his pillar. Of what use is the one? Of what magnificent use the other is! Do you not see the change that has come over the ideals of sainthood between the old time and to-day?

Then there is another important change that has come. A great many people, even in the modern world, are hardly aware of it yet; but we are coming by and by to a time when we shall break down the distinction between the sacred and secular. Do I mean that all the world is going to become secular? I mean nothing of the kind. I mean that all the world is going to become sacred. In other words, instead of thinking that God is in a particular house on a particular street corner on particular days of the week, we are going to think he is in all the houses and on all the streets, in all the offices, in all the homes, and in all the occupations all the time. That is the conception of God that is coming to the modern world. The old idea of God as away off in heaven somewhere, and only visiting the earth on special occasions or sending messengers, is passing away. It is being succeeded by the immanence of God and his presence with us everywhere.

There is not a breath of art that is not thrilling with God, there is not a flower that blooms that is not fragrant and beautiful with God, there is not the eye of a friend in which we do not see the light and the love of God. There is not a natural force in all the world engaged in turning the world's machinery that is not God in activity. There is nowhere that he is not, and everywhere that he is. And this old idea that religion is something apart from life, to be

shut off by itself in dim and consecrated aisles and churches and particular places and books and services,— this is to be absorbed in this modern thought of the divine life all around us and in us everywhere.

And so the men who are doing those things that we are accustomed to call secular are going to begin to be regarded as in the service of God if they are doing good work and honest work. The man, for example, who is engaged in agriculture, is raising his wheat and potatoes and corn by the immediate co-operation of God; and there is no more religious work on the face of the earth than feeding the hungry, if one regards it aright. The men who are engaged in the mechanical arts, in discoveries, in inventions,— these are dealing face to face with God, co-operating with God at every turn, and can no more escape him than they can escape the air they breathe; and we are coming by and by to regard all human life which is clean and true and helpful as a part of the divine service.

Suppose a man comes into a church and kneels and engages in prayer, in what we call divine service. He may be cultivating the divine in him or he may be selfishly trying to save his own soul; in which case I have little hope for his success. He may be doing one or the other. But the man who is trying to carry on the work of the world in some true and honest and helpful way is co-operating with God in bringing to pass that day which we mean when we say: "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven."

Columbus ought to be added to the roll of the saints. He rendered a more magnificent service to the world than almost any saint on the Roman calendar, so far as I am familiar with them. So the great inventors,— Edison, Tesla,— these men to-day who are consecrating themselves to discovering the hidden truths of God, by which humanity may be lifted and civilized, led on,— these are some of our modern saints. There has never lived in all the world

a more saintly character than that of Charles Darwin. What did he do? Born rich, he might have excused himself, as thousands of young rich men do, and said, "There is no need of my putting forth any effort or making myself uneasy." But he consecrated himself from his youth to the study of the laws of God, the method of the unfolding of the divine life on earth. And God granted him the discovery of one of the most magnificent secrets of his methods, so that, when he got through, he could say, with Kepler, "O God, I think over Thy thoughts again after Thee." Patiently waiting, tirelessly watching the unfolding of some form of life, week by week, month by month, year by year; so anxious to be right and tell the truth that, when his book was published, none of his bitterest critics could find anything worse to say against his theory than he had already anticipated and said himself; seeking not the glorification of his own name, seeking the secrets of God's own methods, seeking that he might lead and lift the thought and life of the world.

And so in every department of life, if you choose to look for them,— I speak of these only as an illustration,— here or there; you may find these men who have consecrated themselves to some department of God's wonderful universe.

Take Wagner in music; take the great names in sculpture or painting; take the ones who have given themselves to the development of the finest literary thoughts and methods of the world; take the great political saints. Is there a grander saint on the face of the earth than Abraham Lincoln, who gave himself to the service of his people, not for honor, not for money, but simply that he might carry the burden of the world, and give light and liberty to the captives?

So in every department of life you find these magnificent specimens of the men who have been sainted, set apart, consecrated to the service, the highest service, of God.

There can be bad saints, as I said. If you consecrate yourself to some mean and low ideal, you will become transformed into the likeness of it. You remember the words of Shakspere,—

> " My nature is subdued
> To that it works in, like the dyer's hand."

Whatever you put your life into will ultimately put itself into your life and make you like it. It is inevitable. Take the man who simply makes money for the sake of making money, for the sake of grasping it, for the sake of holding it, because he loves it. Do you think he is a noble type of man? I remember one millionaire in Massachusetts once who told a friend in confidence when he was asked to give something, " If you only knew how it hurts me to part with a dollar, you would pity me." Do you think that is a noble type of man? I heard of another man who, when appealed to to help on some grand humanitarian work, exclaimed: " I can't think of it. Why, I have a hundred and fifty thousand dollars to-day in the bank not drawing a cent of interest." Do you think that a noble type of man?

It is magnificent for people who are endowed with the ability to make money, if they only understand and appreciate that the money is God's, and that they are God's, and that the money is only so much power for magnificent uses. Just as your brains are God's, and your hands are God's, your picture, your statue — whatever you can do — is not your own, but simply so much conferred upon you as a servant or child of God, and brother of all those who need your help and guidance.

So in every department of life you become made over into the likeness of that to which you consecrate yourself. Beware, then, I bid you,— beware as to what you choose as the object of your worship, as to what you take as an ideal to follow; for, whether you realize it or not, those about you will see that there is a gradual remaking of your nature

going on, and that you are becoming like the thing to which you are consecrated.

You see the earliest types of saints were men consecrated to the kind of gods, and poor they were, in which they believed. They were the selfish saints who were simply trying to obtain happiness in this life or the next. I never could see anything particularly noble in any one's hunting for happiness in heaven, any more than in hunting for happiness here, if that is all one is living for,— their own glorification. It is just as mean, I think, to hunt after a harp on the other side as it is to hunt after any particular thing you desire here.

Then there came the nobler idea, that the saint was the one who consecrated himself to the service of his fellow-men in the religious realm. Then the grander broadening of the thought of sainthood, making the whole world religious, and all true and noble and honest work service of God.

And, then, at the end I want to just touch on a kind of sainthood, truer and sweeter to me than any and all of these. The brain of man is magnificent, but the principal use of it is as a guide for the heart. For the grandest thing in all the world, after all, is love, the spiritual nature, tenderness, and care. So, with all his faults,— and I take him simply as one illustration of a saint in that direction,— there is Charles Lamb. They tell me that he used to drink a little too much sometimes. Perhaps he did. I know this only,— that he was sainted through long years, consecrated to the tender care of an insane sister. I only know that, loving books, loving all the high intellectual companionships as he did, he amused his aged and almost senile father by playing with him simple childish games by the hour,— consecrated himself in this noblest of all ways to those that he loved, who loved him and who were dependent on him for their care.

All of us, I suppose, look back, as I do, for some saints

in childhood. I remember my father. I know as I put myself outside the family, and look at him from the point of view of the neighbors, that he had plenty of faults. I remember that through years of poverty and hardship and struggle he consecrated himself to the future welfare of his children, saying that the one thing he was anxious for was that they might be educated, and have an opportunity in life that had never been open to him. And instead of seeking anything for himself, even to the very last of his life, it was the greatest trial that he ever had to endure that he needed to take help from those that he had consecrated his life to help.

And so the mother, in poverty and struggle, patient, watching over the children, serving their commonest needs, bearing their little ills and ails and burdens, giving her whole life long that they might grow up tender and true and noble.

The sister, maiden, or the aunt with no children of her own, giving her whole life to the children of somebody else, until she becomes to them as they grow older the memory of all that is fair and sweet and true.

Those who watch over the sick, doing all menial and disagreeable services that a pang of pain may be more easily borne, that a night may drag itself a little less wearily through,— these that give themselves to the world's sorrows, to the wiping away of its tears, to the helping, bear its burdens. These are the noblest saints of them all.

Dear Father, let us have some high and lofty thought of Thee and of our human relationships; and let us be glad that we may consecrate ourselves to these lofty thoughts and purposes, and in so doing may make the world sweeter, fairer, a little brighter, a little nobler, and may help on the coming of Thy perfect kingdom. Amen.

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OUR DAILY BREAD.

"GIVE us this day our daily bread." Here is, indeed, the universal prayer. For this all men must pray, the richest not less than the poorest of mankind. They may not pray for it in words, but their prayer for it is no less real on that account. The rich may have gold and bonds to any amount, but these they cannot eat; and, to live, a man must eat. He must have his daily bread. This, for one thing, is why it is such an interesting, such a splendid sight to see the thousands and tens of thousands of workmen and clerks and men of business streaming to the great Brooklyn bridge and across the ferries in the morning hours, and going to their various places of work and business,— to see these things here in our great cities, and the like in a hundred smaller ones, and in towns and villages innumerable up and down the land. Professor Huxley tells us that, if our ears were nice enough, we might literally hear the grass growing and the sap creeping upward in the trees. And there was an old Norse deity, Heimdal, if I remember rightly, who could hear (they said so) the wool growing on the backs of the sheep. Now it seems to me that I can hear from all these multitudes of men and women "going forth to their work and their labor until the evening" that universal prayer which Jesus sitting on the hillside taught his disciples: "Give us this day our daily bread."

Our friends, the Roman Catholics, translate, or render, "daily" in this text "super-substantial"; but I don't believe that Jesus was thinking in that way. That is no reason why *we* should not think in that way; and perhaps we may before we get through with our half-hour's thought together.

For the present let us deal with the plain bread, the concrete food of which men must eat or die. Possibly, you think that, having been hard at work for it during the last six days, you would rather think of something else upon the seventh, or you think, perhaps, it is a subject hardly deserving your consideration. If it is so, I am sure you have never read a book which came out some twenty years ago, called "The History of a Mouthful of Bread." A wonderful history it was. It was no tiny book, either, which it took to tell it. For the history went both ways, first backward and then forward. Shall I confess that I cannot remember a word of it? but I can easily imagine the direction of the thought. Think of a few of the most obvious things which such a history would involve. There would be the chemistry of the oven and the yeast, the former, with its history of the coal, taking you back thousands and millions of years, showing you the gigantic ferns from which the coal is made, showing you that your stove's heat and flame are the heat and flame which those gigantic ferns got from the sunshine of that time so long ago. There, too, would be the chemistry of the growing wheat, and man's co-operation with sun and wind and rain. Not only so, but there would be the history of man's patient manipulation of the wheat that wasn't good for the making of bread until it was made good for this purpose by men's patient skill. And how about the soil from which the wheat is grown? The history of that also is a part, only a very little part, of the history of a mouthful of bread. For there was a time when there was no soil upon the earth, only a rocky surface which the glaciers and the floods, the torrents and the mighty rivers, disintegrated, pulverized, so making soil in which a seed might grow. But, evidently, our history would not be complete if we stopped here. Evidently, we must carry it still further back,—back to the cooling of the globe, back to the time when the sun hurled it into space, back to the

time when the sun itself was so hurled from some greater body or generated in some way from the original fiery cloud.

So much for the backward history. The forward history is not a whit less wonderful. For see! It is a history of digestion, alimentation, the circulatory system,— all the systems and processes by which the organism of the human body converts bread or food of any kind into the blood-making mixtures, then into blood itself, into muscular and nervous energy, into brain-stuff and energy, into thought and will. Thought is not matter, as the materialist declares; but thought without matter, without physical sustenance, is impossible here upon the earth, whatever it may be in heavenly places. Our Unitarian minister at Syracuse had a sermon once, when he was my minister in Marblehead, which he called "the roast-beef sermon," so intimate was the connection between it and a certain mighty dinner of roast beef that he had eaten. It would be interesting to know what Shakspere's "Hamlet" was made out of, and to have the "Tempest" or "As You Like It" expressed in terms of meat and drink, and to know what food went to the making of such a phrase as that in "Winter's Tale," —

> "Daffodils,
> That come before the swallow dares, and take
> The winds of March with beauty.

You would rather not think, perhaps, of these things. You think, perhaps, I am materializing thought. Is it not just as true that I am spiritualizing matter? The main thing is the result; and, if the eternal powers can make such plays as Shakspere's, such poems as Browning's, out of bread and beef, that only shows what wonderful stuff bread and beef are, and how wonderful the alchemy of Heaven that can transmute them into thought. That sheet which Peter saw in vision let down by the four corners out of heaven, filled with all manner of four-footed

beasts, creeping things of the earth and flying fowl, was a good symbol of the world. "Arise, kill, and eat," the voice said in the vision. "Not so, Lord," answered Peter. "I have never eaten anything common or unclean." Then said the voice, "What God has cleansed, that call thou not uncommon or unclean." Methods of production or transformation which are good enough for God may very well be good enough for us. If the same Power which out of these stones maketh bread is able out of this bread to make thought and wit and song, that only shows that we have been fooling ourselves with words, that material things have spiritual possibilities, given the power of God to work in them.

I have not begun to exhaust the meanings that inhere in a mouthful of bread, the wonders of its history; but, as I have many other things to say, I will dwell no longer upon these. I trust that I have said enough to show that our daily bread is not too small or mean a subject for a sermon: that even a mouthful has implications as extensive as Tennyson's flower in the crannied wall. Of this, too, may we not say that, if we knew what it is, all in all, we should know what God and man is? Wholly unwarrantable is the fear of many persons that we are coming to the end of mystery. We were never farther from the end of it than we are now. The more thou searchest, the more thou shalt wonder. Not unadvisedly did Mrs. Browning sing that

> "Earth is crammed with heaven,
> And every common bush afire with God."

The next thing to which I would call your attention is that, whenever we take the prayer for daily bread upon out lips, we are uttering a password which admits us to great ranges of political economy. In a History of America which has quite recently been published, a most elaborate and scholarly performance, the whole thing is made to turn on the degree to which races of men have succeeded in

shifting the problem of food-supply from a natural to an artificial basis. No civilization worthy of the name, the writer tells us, has ever been founded on any other basis than that of the wheat and the other food-producing grains. It is really bread that men must have to nourish them: the fruits of trees, the roots of bulbous plants, are not enough. They are not rich enough in the substances which are the great nourishers of muscular and nervous energy. "But the most important reason for the superiority of grain agriculture as a basis of social advancement only becomes apparent," we are assured, "when the nature of its methods is considered. Cereal agriculture, that of wheat and the other grains, alone, among the forms of food-production, taxes, recompenses, and stimulates labor and ingenuity to an equal degree. Populations which depend on tree culture never learn the rudiments of the labor lesson which is the beginning of the education of humanity. Root-cultivating populations learn only the bare rudiments. It is the peculiar quality of grain agriculture that, by occupying man regularly during a considerable part of the year, it tends directly to render the unit of labor a constant quantity, and to give it new forms of employment. . . . When the unit of labor has once been rendered a constant quantity, the material of civilization has been provided."

All this sounds reasonable enough, if rather dry and hard; and it would seem much more so if I could set it in the writer's frame of argument and illustration. But, whether it is entirely reasonable or somewhat fanciful, nothing is surer than that all our systems of political economy are hardly more than commentaries on the petition, "Give us this day our daily bread." The Malthusian problem, so called for its great Unitarian investigator, Malthus, was "the pressure of population on subsistence,"—big words which only mean, "How can we have enough for all?" For the old doctrine of pious improvidence, "If God sends mouths, he will send something to put into them," finds little to support it in the

economic facts. The way out that Malthus suggested may not be the only way nor the best. It was to minimize the population. But there are other ways,— improved methods of agriculture, wider tracts, irrigation, new fertilizers; while all peoples' better knowledge of each other and better means of transportation bring the overplus of America to the starving folk of India or Porto Rico double quick. Nevertheless, the fact remains that food-supply, the daily strength for daily needs, is a matter fundamental to political economy and to the welfare of the race. It is a proverb that armies go upon their bellies. It is true of the industrial army. The good eaters are the good workers all the world over. So the political economists insist. Said I not truly, then, that "Give us this day our daily bread" is our most universal prayer? Man shall not live by bread alone, but there is more in bread alone than superficially appears,— a yeast that raises *men* out of their degradation and their self-contempt. The phrase in Proverbs, which may have suggested the phrase in the Lord's Prayer, "Feed me with food that is needful for me," goes on to say, "lest I be poor, and steal." Stealing is not the only vice that thrives upon an underfed condition. When Sydney Smith's physician advised him to walk every morning on an empty stomach, the quick-witted dean immediately asked him, "Whose?" A stomach that is habitually empty becomes a tramping ground for evil passions. Let the individual circumstance be sufficiently acute, and it illustrates the general law. Have you never seen a company of gentlemen who, intolerably hungry, have sunk from zone to zone of race-development until they became simply barbarous? If you have not, you have been more fortunate than I; and the lesson was so instructive that ever since I have wondered at the self-restraint of shipwrecked, starving men. It was to the hungry Jesus that the tempter came in the great parable. There is a touch which is significant of an immeasurable range of human experience. Mrs. Browning, in "Aurora Leigh," is dealing with the same order of relations when

she cries, "How miserable [certain folk] must be to be so cruel!" The food which rich and comfortable people waste from day to day — eating too much — would save the poorer from a thousand crimes and sins. Perhaps not, were it given to them outright. That would frequently make bad matters worse. The bread that truly feeds us must be fairly earned. Then it is sacramental, nourishing the body less than it nourishes the soul.

Here is a light on the petition, "Give us this day our daily bread," that makes it glow and burn with a most wondrous radiance. It may be, as the New Testament says, that we know not what we should pray for as we ought. It is certain that, when we pray for our daily bread in a right manly fashion, we are praying for something better than any imaginable nectar and ambrosia. For to pray for one's daily bread in a right manly fashion is to pray for it with one's hands, one's arms, with the muscles of one's back and loins, with one's intelligence and skill. And it is in just these ways that thousands and millions of people are praying for it all the time; and, so praying, they get more than they pray for,— not bread alone, not merely the day's wages, small or great, but manhood and womanhood in the degree that their prayer, their effort, their persistency, is good and strong. It is this thought which gives dignity and beauty to the swarming multitudes who go forth to their work and their labor until the evening. See them in your summer-time vacations, as I do in Chesterfield,

> "Brushing with hasty steps the dews away,
> To meet the sun upon the upland lawn."

See them, as I have said, in the early morning streaming over to New York across the Brooklyn ferries and the bridge. If you look at them in the wrong way, they do not bring you any special inspiration. They are a sordid lot. The young men are dull from over-sleep or languid from the lack of that which they have foolishly foregone. The shop girls are pale,

anæmic; and they giggle painfully. As for the others, there are strong faces here and there, with power in them, and duty and intelligence; but the most are hard and cold. And these boys will earn one or two dollars a day, these girls much less, these hard-headed men of business a few hundreds. They will really earn so much, though they may get much more. But, in truth, all this is very superficial. The money earned is but the roughest symbol of the net earnings of the day. These are best expressed in terms of character,— independence, progress, self-control, self-mastery, helpfulness, the unspeakably good and sweet and noble satisfaction of doing one's own part well and handsomely in the great business of mankind, and being so a fellow-workman with the Eternal Power which makes for righteousness.

When we were considering a little while ago the relative advantages of different industries, we found that the grains were better than the trees and roots, because to raise them was to raise better men,— men of more stable habits, greater ingenuity. That is why they are fundamental to all real civilization. Hard work, and not soft leisure, is the stuff out of which character is made, national character as well as individual. England and Holland have a story in this kind that is full of splendid inspiration. Benjamin Franklin, writing in 1763, calls England "that petty island, which, compared to America, is only a stepping-stone in a brook, scarce enough of it above water to keep one's shoes dry." "I suppose," another traveller says, "it has more acres for breeding frogs than any other northern country except Holland." An old chronicler's description of North Britain says that the inhabitants of the country, "when overcome by hunger, used to creep into the marshes, and there remain a long time, onlie to qualify the heats of their stomachs by violence, which otherwise would have wrought and been ready to oppresse them for hunger and want of sustinance." But let them laugh that win. That petty island "is to-day,"

as Charles Dudley Warner, no Anglomaniac, has written, "the centre of the wealth, the civilization of the world," and "of the moral forces that make progress possible." Holland, under conditions even more unfavorable, achieved a glorious success. There was a time when to her, and not to England, seemed to be pledged the mastery of the seas. Had she been compassed by them, as is England, that promise might have been fulfilled. That joking phrase, "The Dutch have taken Holland," has sober truth in it; for they did take it from the sea, and when, to thwart the lust of Spain, they broke down their dykes and flooded their luxurious fields and lovely gardens with the waves of the North Sea, they did but welcome them to their old haunts. It was because the English and the Dutch, earning their daily bread under these hard conditions, earned at the same time a glad indomitable strength of body and of mind that all things were possible for them. To those regions of America which are as much too dry as Holland was too wet we may well look for the development of that sterling manhood which will be greater wealth than mines of silver or of gold. The soil of our New England States is not the best soil imaginable for raising any kind of vegetable or fruit, but there is no better soil for raising men. They build its granite ledges into the foundations of their righteous purpose and their holy will.

Forever beautiful is that artifice by which the laws of life, working their principle of correlated growth, turn more and better into the treasury of a man's life than he asks for or even thinks. What he asks for is his daily bread, tomorrow's if you will, or something laid up for a rainy day; and, if the day's work is done diligently and faithfully, he is building up a character that can stand four-square to all the winds that blow. This is the bonus that God gives to every faithful workman in his business. And the same daily work for daily bread that brings this rich reward to the individual is taken up into the great economy of uni-

versal needs and satisfactions. My predecessor in my Brooklyn pulpit had a homely parable of this which has recurred to me a hundred times, and given me a heart of cheer, and made the mill-round of my daily work and that of millions of my fellow-beings seem to me a golden pathway of the sun. He said: "Like the horse in the treadmill, we pace the weary round of our accustomed work,— week, month, year in and out,— and seem at its close just where we were at the beginning. We may have a few more dollars; but even these [may] have lost their peculiar charm for us. We do not know that this very treadmill life of ours, and of such as we, has been turning the machinery of God's providence to society; that all the moral, social, political blessings of agriculture, commerce, arts, and manufactures, are thus created and bestowed upon men." But I must not insist too much upon these things, lest the self-respect I fain would nourish in your breasts in view of the parts that you are taking in the great economy of life should overleap itself, and fall over into arrogance and sinful pride. For, truly, we are no flies upon the wheel whose revolution does the whole world's work, but each one part and parcel of that energizing force which speeds it ever round and round.

"Man shall not live by bread alone"; and this saying of the New Testament is true, however inclusive, of all things that men work for, the term "bread" may be. Only be it always remembered that, however narrow these may be, or however extended, from mere necessary food and clothing and shelter to the utmost range of luxury, the man striving for them and getting them does not get these alone. Striving lawfully, the poorest gets a wealth of manhood which is more than all the richest can rejoice in if they have not this as well,— if they are not, as Jesus phrased it, "rich toward God"; rich on that side of their nature which lies open to the ideal, the excellent, the truth and beauty of the world. Not only so, but from their overflowing treasury the

good of life will stream into the lean or empty coffers of their fellow-men, and go toward keeping up that fund of universal goodness whose depletion would be a worse misfortune than the falling of the earth into some fiery cavern of the sun.

Our daily bread! The bread we need each day for the support and sustenance of our habitual life! Let us think of this a moment ere we go our several ways. There has been much exploiting of the fallacy that the rich are growing richer and the poor are growing poorer in our time. The truth distorted here is that some of the rich have been getting so enormously rich that the gulf between them and the poorest has been getting very wide. Meantime the condition of the poor has been improving much more rapidly than the wealth of the richest has been increasing. Moreover, we waste much thought on these conditions, as if this wealth were the rich man's outright, and not his mainly in trust for the community which in reality has earned the most of it. The community, I say, and not his employees only. When we come to the question of needful daily bread, the social differences are not so appalling or distressing. The rich as often have too much of luxury as the poor too little. Bare indeed must be the house that is not a better one to live in than the rich man's which is merely the upholsterer's opportunity. It was William Morris's doctrine — and he could well support it — that luxury is the most deadly enemy of household beauty. A little with good taste and judgment and sobriety will do more than much without these invaluable ingredients.

The trouble is not so much that there is any lack of needful bread as that men know not what they should pray for as they ought.

> "Daughters of Time, the hypocritic Days,
> Muffled and dumb like barefoot dervishes,
> And marching single in an endless file,
> Bring diadems and fagots in their hands.

To each they offer gifts after his will,—
Bread, kingdoms, stars, and sky that holds them all.
I, in my pleachèd garden, watched the pomp,
Forgot my morning wishes, hastily
Took a few herbs and apples, and the Day
Turned and departed silent. I, too late,
Under her solemn fillet saw the scorn."

There is the bottom fact.

"The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars,
But in ourselves, that we are underlings."

The trouble is that from the abundance of the table spread we take the least and worst; too seldom, certainly, the best. Think how it is spread! What beauty of the world is here,—such sunsets as we had last night; what knowledge of its wondrous laws; what arts and sciences; what stories of great men, and good; the ever-womanly leading us on, alluring us from height to height; the great poems of the ages and those of our own time; the great books of all kinds; the great music of the great tonal masters, for those who have ears attuned to their celestial harmony; the actual concrete life, strong, eager, tender, and impassioned, that inexhaustible fountain from which the artist in whatever kind has drawn his inspirations! Oh, the depths of the riches both of the knowledge and goodness of God! There is enough for all; and who need crowd another from his rightful place? Our daily bread,—it is the universe, no less! And as, in the infinitely pathetic story of the last supper at which Jesus sat with his disciples, he broke the bread and gave it to them, saying, "Take, eat, this is my body!" so we, who sit at the great feast of life, at tables groaning beneath the weight of every beautiful and precious thing, hear in some mystic fashion the great Master of the Feast saying to each and every one of us, "Take, eat, this is my body." "And he divided unto them his living"; yea, he makes us sharers of his own eternal life, and in such measure as we will. Even so, Father; for so it seems good in thy sight.

Said I not rightly, then, that there was no prayer more universal than the one which reads, "Give us this day our daily bread"? Have I exaggerated its significance? On the contrary, I have not begun to appropriate, much less to exhaust, the natural implications of the thought. But this is so only because all life is of a piece, and we cannot touch it anywhere without entering into infinite relations. Begin with any room, and follow the leadings of the open doors, this way or that, and we may "wander on from home to home," with endless satisfaction and delight. O Life, Life, Life! how much more wonderful art thou than any theories of thee that our poor lips can frame! May we not die, the children of thy womb, before we have begun to rightly know how good it is to lie upon thy bosom and be nourished at thy breast!

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DEFEAT AND VICTORY

A Palm Sunday Sermon

GEO. H. ELLIS
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DEFEAT AND VICTORY.

As a text, I have chosen, first, from the eleventh chapter of the Gospel according to Mark, the eighth to the tenth verse, inclusive: "And many spread their garments in the way; and others cut down branches off the trees, and strawed them in the way. And they that went before, and they that followed, cried, saying, Hosanna! Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord! Blessed be the kingdom of our father David, that cometh in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!" And then some verses from the fifteenth chapter of Mark, from the ninth to the fifteenth verse, inclusive: "And Pilate answered them, saying, Will ye that I release unto you the King of the Jews? For he knew that the chief priests had delivered him for envy. But the chief priests moved the people, that he should rather release Barabbas unto them. And Pilate answered and said again unto them, What will ye then that I shall do unto him whom ye call the King of the Jews? And they cried out again, Crucify him. Then Pilate said unto them, Why, what evil hath he done? And they cried out the more exceedingly, Crucify him. And so Pilate, willing to content the people, released Barabbas unto them, and delivered Jesus, when he had scourged him, to be crucified."

As setting forth in beautiful language the great central principle with which I shall briefly deal this morning, I shall read to you a poem written by the sculptor William W. Story. It is entitled "Io Victis!" which I will translate as "The Pæan of the Conquered."

I sing the hymn of the conquered, who fell in the Battle of Life,—
The hymn of the wounded, the beaten, who died overwhelmed in the strife;
Not the jubilant song of the victors, for whom the resounding acclaim
Of nations was lifted in chorus, whose brows wore the chaplet of fame,
But the hymn of the low and the humble, the weary, the broken in heart,
Who strove and who failed, acting bravely a silent and desperate part;
Whose youth bore no flower on its branches, whose hopes burned in ashes away,
From whose hands slipped the prize they had grasped at, who stood at the dying of day
With the wreck of their life all around them, unpitied, unheeded, alone,
With Death swooping down o'er their failure, and all but their faith overthrown.

While the voice of the world shouts its chorus, its pæan for those who have won;
While the trumpet is sounding triumphant, and high to the breeze and the sun
Glad banners are waving, hands clapping, and hurrying feet
Thronging after the laurel-crowned victors,— I stand on the field of defeat,
In the shadow, with those who are fallen, and wounded, and dying, and there
Chant a requiem low, place my hand on their pain-knotted brows, breathe a prayer,
Hold the hand that is helpless, and whisper, "They only the victory win
Who have fought the good fight, and have vanquished the demon that tempts us within;
Who have held to their faith unseduced by the prize that the world holds on high;
Who have dared for a high cause to suffer, resist, fight,— if need be, to die."

Speak, History! who are Life's victors? Unroll thy long annals, and say
Are they those whom the world called the victors,— who won the success of a day?
The martyrs or Nero? The Spartans, who fell at Thermopylæ's tryst,
Or the Persians and Xerxes? His judges or Socrates? Pilate or Christ?

The common people, it is said, heard Jesus gladly. They did so long as he spoke pleasant words, words of hope and comfort and cheer only; but it is on record on some other occasion that they thought he had spoken a hard saying, and they went back and walked no more with him. So the common people shouted, Hosanna! so long as the man of Nazareth seemed to be the fulfilment of their popular dreams, so long as he was the promised Messiah, the son of David, who had come to restore the kingdom to Israel and give them victory over all their enemies and make them the centre and the desired of the earth. So long they were ready to welcome his coming. They spread their garments on the colt on which he was to ride victorious into the capital city. They even took off their garments and cast them in the way, and tore branches from the trees and brought them in order to spread a pleasant path for the feet of the animal that bore him. But it was only two or three days. Jesus went into the city and into the temple, and there he interfered with the popular ideals of the worship. He cast out those that bought and sold in the temple, and declared that, while it was called a house of God, it had been made a den of thieves. And then, sitting on the mountain side, he wept over the city, and prophesied that the day should come when not one stone of the famous temple should be left upon another. He cut squarely across the popular ideals, and held up before them something so grand and noble as they were not yet able to understand. Then they were ready victims for the chief priests in their envy and prejudice; and the voices which two or three days before had cried, Hosanna! were just as ready to shout, "Crucify him, crucify him! Release unto us the robber Barabbas!"

And so the triumph is turned into defeat; and he who was welcomed as a king, on Friday afternoon is hanging on the cross, a few Roman soldiers around him to guard him and see him die. One or two of the disciples hid in the

crowd, and some women are there standing afar off and looking. Peter has profanely denied that he ever knew him. His cause is broken, scattered, the triumph is apparently one of the most hopeless defeats in the history of the world; and he who was king of the Jews two or three days before is now outcast and deserted. And, when night closes, and one man begs the privilege of giving the poor body decent burial, it looks as though the end had come of everything that he hoped, everything that his disciples had cherished. Pilate went to sleep comfortably, thinking that one more of these disturbers was out of the way, thinking what a curious madman he was; and the high priests and scribes felt that they had gained a complete victory.

And yet nearly two thousand years afterwards the cross, which was then a symbol of not only death, but utter ignominy and shame,— as if a gallows should be our symbol of triumph,— has become the ideal of victory over all the civilized world.

This, then, that Jesus suffered when he hung on the cross and felt that even the Father had given him up, and cried, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" — this which looked like such utter defeat, has become the grandest triumph of time; and this cross has emerged from that darkness, and the light from the unseen shining upon it has made it a glory such as is nowhere else to be found among the sons of men.

It seems to me, then, for our Palm Sunday study, that, as we stand in the shadow of the cross and catch the reflection of its glory, it may be well for us to raise the question as to what is defeat and what is victory.

As we look superficially over this wide scene of human life, we are very ready to bring charges against the justice, the goodness, the mercy, the loving care that professes to be interested in the government of mankind. I suppose none of us are quite contented with the life that is our own. We had dreams which have not been realized; and all of

our lives in some certain way we perhaps have come to look upon as failures. You remember how Wordsworth puts it in that beautiful poem of his, the "Ode to Immortality,"— how we come from heaven trailing clouds of glory, but, as we get into mid life, we tread the common, dusty pathway, and all the glory is gone, and there is around us only the common light of day.

This perhaps typifies what the most of us feel in regard to the meaning and outcome of our lives. Friends go away from us, we lose them by alienation, or they fade into the shadow. Money comes or goes: if it comes, it is not quite the thing we thought it was going to be; if we miss it, it seems as though we miss that which might have made such a difference to us. So, whatever may have been our dreams,— let it be money, power, social position, political honor, let it be whatever you please,— whether we gain it or lose it, is it not true that, as we get fairly along in life, there goes out of us at any rate the sense of contentment, of success, that we had looked forward to and hoped would be ours by mid life, or as we get on towards the afternoon of our career?

Let me instance to you one or two specimens before I come to touch the principle which underlies it all. Was the life of Socrates a failure or a success? He became very famous; but he was put to death ignominiously, as was Jesus,— put to death by the popular religious feeling and prejudice of his time because he taught something better than they were able to comprehend. Was the life of Giordano Bruno, who was burned in Rome three hundred years ago, a failure or a success? He travelled over Europe to escape persecution, now in one country, now in another. At last he was imprisoned, and suffered for six long years, then ended by being burned at the stake. Was it worth while? From the point of view of what the world ordinarily calls success it seems to me that Socrates and Bruno and Jesus were anything but wise. Why should they take all this

trouble, why cut across the prejudices of their time? Why not conform and be comfortable, have friends, live contentedly, be rich perhaps, and die with honor? Why all this absurd and Quixotic devotion to something which brings no money in the market, to something which brings no content, no peace, no joy apparently, from the point of view of the world, but only sorrow and trouble and death at the end?

Let us turn squarely around, and look at one or two other types of life. I had a friend who was a famous lawyer, a man of remarkable power and ability, a man who won a great success in his profession, became widely known, honored, rich; but he confessed to me in his old age that he had lost all taste for art, for books, for those things that make up the higher intellectual, æsthetic, and spiritual life of man. He succeeded in making money, acquiring power, in making himself a name. But was his life a success?

Take the man who becomes immensely rich, so that he does not know what to do with his means, but who is only rich. Is he a success? I know a man who said, when he had reached old age, that he had not time to go to Europe, he did not care to go, he had no interest in travel. He cared nothing for foreign countries, architecture, art, music, nothing for the civilization of the world. He never gave anything to help on the world; and he said to a friend once that really the only time he was quite content and happy was when the proper period came around, and he went down to his safe deposit vaults and shut himself up alone in a little room with a pair of scissors to cut off coupons. That was the only thing he really took any special comfort in.

Was he a success? Was a life like that a defeat or a victory?

Here is a young man with fine intellectual powers, brilliant promise, who looks forward to winning a place in the world. But ill-health overtakes him; and year after year

he is crippled and sick, rendered unable to do the things of which he had dreamed, and yet not letting himself grow bitter. He becomes patient and noble and sweet, does not even tell of his pains lest he wound or hurt those who are watching over him so anxiously, but week by week and month by month and year by year blossoms into sweetness and tenderness and truth and devotion,— fails in everything he dreamed of doing. But is his life a failure?

Here is a woman capable of love, with a woman's longing for wifehood and motherhood, but who for one reason or another finds herself in mid life alone. She does not permit herself to grow bitter, but determines to make herself sunshine wherever she goes; and she is sweet and tender and loving and true. And, though she has no children of her own, she is mother, and more than mother, to the children of sister or friend, until they come to hear the rustle of her skirt as the finest music, and her voice as calling them to all that they care for and revere; and her memory has a magic power to uplift and make them devoted and true. She has failed; but is it failure, after all? Failed of the things she cared for, perhaps, more than she would ever be willing to admit to her closest friend; and yet is that kind of life a failure?

All over the world, look wherever you will, here are the cases that seem to illustrate one principle or the other. Failing in one direction, are they successful in another? Must we pronounce this whole confused scene and scheme of human life as having no order, as watched over by no love, as having no principle running through it? Is there no one who cares? Is there no eternal and inevitable law that is illustrated by all these varieties of personal experience and character?

I should think, indeed, that this was a pretty poor world, if only rich people succeeded, if only healthy people succeeded, if only famous people succeeded, if only the people who have their hearts' desire, have children, and whose children grow old and live in honor, succeeded.

Is there any success which is open to all of us? Paul, in one of his illustrations concerning the arena, speaks of the race, and says all of the contestants run; but only one wins the prize. Is that the way it is in this life, or is the prize such that all of us can win it if we will? I believe that so justly and so lovingly are the affairs of this world managed that no man, no woman, no child, ever fails, or ever can fail, unless he or she chooses the failure; that all of us can win, if we will.

But how shall we judge success or failure? Lowell somewhere has a poem in which he pictures some gold fishes as swimming about and catching reflections and shadows of some other kind of life that is outside of and above them, and hints that their inability to understand — and yet the fact that there is a higher life which they do not understand — may have a lesson for us. We may be like the gold fish. One of them, not being able to breathe out of the element in which he swims, would be utterly unable to comprehend the life and the joy of a bird in the air. A boy is not able to understand a man; but a man, having been a boy, can understand him. If a grub could be conscious all the way up and through the process by which it comes to be a butterfly, the butterfly might be able to understand the grub, though the grub could not understand the butterfly.

Men living on a certain plane may count that only success which seems to succeed on that level, and everything failure which is not the kind of success which they are only able to comprehend. You know that a man has three or four separate grades of being. He is first an animal; and he ought to be a perfect animal, if he can. But the man who is perfect simply as an animal may be a success as an animal, and yet a perfect failure on the next higher plane; and that which succeeds on this higher plane may be to the man on the animal level a disastrous failure, and he may be utterly unable to comprehend the contentment of this man who loves everything that he cares for and values.

Suppose a man climbs out of the animal into the affectional plane,— cares for wife, for friends, for children, but for nothing above. The intellectual life, the artistic life, are nothing to him. We can conceive of a man like that whose conscience, whose care for right and wrong, do not amount to a great deal. He may succeed on that level; and he would think that the man who dies for conscience' sake is a fool. Sir Thomas More turned away from the kisses of his wife, and chose the cold lip of the axe instead; and his wife begged and pleaded with him on her knees, and undoubtedly thought him a fool for turning from all he loved except the highest things,— dying because he would be Sir Thomas More, and could be nothing less. But the persons who have no opinions, who do not consider opinions of any worth, who do not care for the distinction between truth and falsehood, look at a man like this as foolish to give all the world for an intangible idea, dying for the sake of a crowd that does not appreciate him, dying because he must be true, dying for a far-off future that he will never see.

Do you not see, then, that success on one level of life may be failure on another, and failure on one level may be success on another, and that those who occupy the lower grades of life may be utterly unable to appreciate the success that is won on a higher level? The charge is sometimes made against the world that right is always in trouble. You remember those famous lines of Lowell from "The Present Crisis" —

> "Truth forever on the scaffold, Wrong forever on the throne;
> Yet that scaffold sways the future, and behind the dim unknown
> Standeth God within the shadow, keeping watch above his own."

There, friends, is the principle and the eternal truth. It always has been so; and in a growing world it always must be so. The highest, the ideal right must be always misconceived and opposed, because the world is like an army on the march. The vanguard that is leading is the few, the

seers, those who see and who care; and the great majority follow on, slowly, unconsciously, perhaps. But they oppose these men that disturb them and call them to some higher and grander thing than they are able as yet to appreciate.

And let me put in one plea for consideration for these people who cannot see and cannot understand. The people who put Jesus to death were not, as the world goes, bad people. They were the best people of their time. The people who put Socrates to death were not the rough-scuff and rabble of Athens. They were the people,— the people who care, the most respectable citizens, the judges. The men who put Bruno to death in Rome were not bad people. They were the best people, the ones who represented the highest ideals of the age, so far as they understood them.

And so, since the world is growing, he who cares for the highest things must expect to be alone, must expect to be misunderstood, must expect to be opposed and thwarted. But he must be content with his vision; and, if he wishes to win the highest and finest success, he must be true to that vision as Jesus was, even to the cross and the sepulchre.

Let us then, as in the light of the cross we estimate the meaning of a life victory, see that it is something that all of us can win; and let us remember that it is not down here on the common level of our business, of money-getting, of social success, of power, of fame. None of these are wrong. They may not even be in the way of the finest success; but the highest success, the human victory, is up here. Where? Up here, where man thinks, where he feels, where he loves, where he consecrates himself, where he cares; up here, where man has an outlook on the heavens; up here, in the realm of the spirit, that which is the child of God, has kinship with God, longs for and looks towards God, as goal and end. Here is the place for human success. Here is the place for manly and womanly victory.

And when you come at last to stand on the verge of life, only memories behind you and the shadow before, it will not

be simply what you have done, what you have gained; it will not be offices you have occupied, places of honor you have filled; not even be the friends round you or the enemies that have been turned into friends; it will not be even the love of those dearest to you,— it will be none of these things that will determine the question as to whether you stand there defeated or victor. It will be the question whether through all these life experiences you have made yourself a man, made yourself a woman, wrought out that which is noble and fine and high and sweet, wrought out in yourself that which is akin with the Divine.

Father, let us consecrate ourselves this morning to these highest ideals. Let us, while not despising the common successes of the world, fix our eyes on that which is, indeed, victory. And may we not call the world poor and mean, a failure; may we not impeach Thy justice and Thy love, if, though everything else be lost to us, we still have ourselves, our souls, and Thee! Amen.

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BY

M. J. SAVAGE

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY E. A. HORTON

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INTRODUCTION.

The preface by Mr. Savage gives the reasons, clearly and concisely, why a book like this is needed. It answers a great demand, and it will supply a serious deficiency. Having had the privilege of reading the contents very thoroughly, I gladly record my satisfaction in the character of the work, my hope of its wide acceptance and use, my appreciation of the author's motives in preparing it. The questions and answers allow of supplementing, of individual handling, of personal direction. It is not a hard-and-fast production. There is a large liberty of detail, explanation, and unfolding. The doctrinal positions are in accord with rational religion and liberal Christianity, the critical judgments are based on modern scholarship, and the great aim throughout is to assist an inquirer or pupil to a positive, permanent faith. If any one finds comments and criticisms which at first sight seem needless, let it be remembered that a Unitarian catechism must give reasons, point out errors, and trace causes: it cannot simply dogmatize. I am sure that in the true use of this book great gains will come to our Sunday-schools, to searchers after truth, to our cause.

EDWARD A. HORTON

AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

This little Catechism has grown out of the needs of my own work. Fathers and mothers have said to me, "Our children are constantly asking us questions that we cannot answer." Perfectly natural! Their reading and study have not been such as to make them familiar with the results of critical scholarship. The great modern revolution of thought is bewildering. This is an attempt to make the path of ascertained truth a little plainer.

This is the call for help in the home. Besides this, a similar call has come from the Sunday-school. Multitudes of teachers have little time to ransack libraries and study large works. This is an attempt, then, to help them, by putting in their hands, in brief compass, the principal things believed by Unitarians concerning the greatest subject.

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Being a Review of the World's Beliefs on the Subject, a Consideration of Present Conditions of Thought and Feeling, leading to the Question as to whether it can be demonstrated as a Fact.

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SERMONS OF M. J. SAVAGE

VOL. IV. APRIL 20, 1900. NO. 27.

IMMORTALITY

An Easter Sermon

GEO. H. ELLIS
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1900

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IMMORTALITY.

For a text I take the clause found in the fifteenth chapter of the First Epistle of Paul to the church in Corinth, the fifty-third verse,— "This mortal must put on immortality."

We do not live to-day in the kind of universe in which Paul was at home. We do not look upon the questions of life and death as he regarded them. I think we do not suppose that we are to put on immortality as though it were something extraneous to us, something not naturally our own, to be conferred by an outside power. If we are immortal at all, it is because we are a part of the life of God, naturally, inherently immortal; and the immortality is not something to be attained, it is not something to be entered upon. If we are not immortal this moment, we never shall be: if we are not in eternity now, we shall never know what eternity means. I believe that we are inhabitants of eternity, and that immortality is ours as a birthright, because we are children of God.

But immortal! Did you ever stop to think what it means, or, rather, did you ever try to think what it means? I remember sometimes, when I was a boy, as I lay under the trees and watched the cloud shadows pass over me and gazed into the sky, I used to try to think *Forever;* and I followed that until I drooped, and my spirit almost swooned in the endeavor to trace even some slight hint of its meaning. Immortal, never to die!

Suppose we could meet a man who was born at the time of Alfred in England. He would be able to tell us about Chaucer, the morning star of English song. He could describe the condition of things when the Norman William

came over and fought the battle that changed the destiny of the island. He could trace the course of events which led to the wrenching of the great Charter from John. He may have seen Shakespeare. All the course of English history would be in his mind, hundreds of years would be to him as yesterday, when it is passed.

But a life that reached from Alfred to Victoria, what would that be? A moment of time. Stretch that life back until the decline of the Roman Empire, beyond that to the days of Romulus and Remus, farther still to Homer, beyond the twilight of history; and where are we then? Why, it is only a few thousand years; and this human race of ours, they tell us, has been here on this planet three or four hundred thousand years at least.

Suppose one of the first men that ever looked upon the stars were here for us to talk with: how much of immortality would his life cover? Again, a fleeting minute. Suppose a life could cover the history of the earth. The earth, they tell us, has been some millions of years in coming into its present position; but the earth is one of the youngest of the children of the sun, flung off only a little while ago, and tumbling into a ring, then into a globe to swing about it. This solar system of ours is countless millions of years old perhaps; but what is the age of this solar system beside a galaxy,— a galaxy that includes millions of suns and systems? And then, when you have traced the age of a galaxy, you have only begun.

Immortality,— thought faints at the attempt to grasp its meaning; and I do not wonder that sometimes, when people are weary, they hardly feel as though they wished to undertake the task of living forever. They sigh, as Harriet Martineau used to, for rest, saying she should tire of the Forever. We become lost in this limitless universe, in attempting to comprehend what it all means; but — and here is the significant thing about it all — we become lost in this wondrous universe when we attempt to comprehend

what anything means. Here is an Easter lily: if I could explain that, I could explain God. One of the plainest leaves on this stock,— I ask what it means, try to follow up my question, and I am overwhelmed in the presence of the Infinite.

Infinity on every side, then,— not only the immortal life, but the life that now is, and the progress of human knowledge. It only means that the mystery deepens and widens, the more we know, the more we comprehend the fact that the universe outruns us on every hand, and is lost in the illimitable.

A man lives in a little narrow valley. It seems to him he knows his world. He climbs the mountain side. He knows more: he sees miles and miles further; but the horizon only recedes and the unknown grows greater by as much as the known becomes a little more and more. We open one room, and explore that; and there are doors on every side of it opening into other rooms. We enter another one of them, still doors opening into others, and so on forever.

A limitless universe! It overwhelms us, it staggers us, it wearies us; and yet right in there, friends,— and this is the point that I wish to emphasize in connection with this illimitability of things,— right in there in the fact that we grow weary, in the thought that we are staggered, in the thought that we cannot comprehend, in the fact that the universe is boundless and infinite on every hand, is the one thing that makes the immortal hope a reasonable one. If the universe had a limit, and if we could reach that limit after even ten millions of years, then we should have gotten through; and, when we had gotten through,— ennui, nothing more, no new study, nothing further to explore. And we should pray for some kind of death to end the weariness of it all.

It is because this universe is limitless on every hand that we can believe in immortality as a reasonable thing for these insatiable minds of ours, these eyes that never see

enough, these hands that never grasp enough, these hearts that can never love enough, these imaginations that can never wonder enough, these fancies that can never explore enough. We may expand and expand and expand forever, and never get through, never exhaust the wonder, the beauty, the glory of it all. So immortal hopes are purely rational hopes in the presence of the kind of universe we have found this to be.

Not only that, I sometimes find myself wondering, as I think of the magnificent dreams I cherish, as to whether there is any ground for such marvellous hopes. But think for a moment. The farther we push our investigations into this universe, the more wonderful it grows. The telescope only opens for us new fields of marvel at every step of the way; and the microscope reveals to us in the downward look towards the infinity of littleness wonders more wonderful still, if possible, than those that the telescope suggests. Never anywhere a disappointment, never an incomplete or imperfect bit of Nature's handiwork. The most wonderful things that man can make are poor, petty, crude, compared with the perfect finish of the tiniest things that the most powerful microscope can reveal. The sting, for example, of a bee exceeds with its perfection of finish the most perfect bit of work in the direction of littleness that human skill has ever been able to achieve.

And then when we trace the history of man on this planet from the time when he stepped forth from his apparent equality with the animals, and see what he has wrought out, and see how he has weighed and measured the stars, see how he has made the lightnings his servants to come and go at his bidding, see all the wonderful discoveries and inventions, and when we find that we are on the borders in every direction of more wonderful things still; when we find that a particle of crude matter, investigated and pushed to the utmost, fades away until it takes us face to face with God himself,— we are compelled to think that there is no hope,

no dream, which man can cherish that is extravagant. There is nothing that he can hope for as possibility on this planet which is unreasonable. There is nothing that he can dream of as a possibility in the future that can be charged with being insane. So let us believe, so far as these objections are concerned, in all the grandest and mightiest things that poets have ever sung or seers have ever gained glimpses of touching the immortal life.

This dream of the immortal life matches man, human nature, in a threefold way; and these three ways I wish to touch upon with a few brief suggestions, such as the time will allow this morning.

The immortal hope matches in the first place man's intellect. This hope goes along with trust in the sanity of things. If the universe is not sane, why, then, we do not even know that it is not sane. We know nothing. If it be sane, then this great hope is the one thing we have a right rationally to cherish. Think for one moment. Can we believe that the Power that has manifested itself through the stars, the suns, the systems, the worlds, and in all the history of this earth, has been engaged in this process for millions and millions of years to no end at all? Take the ordinarily accepted theory, which is as good as another for our illustration, whether it shall be finally scientifically accepted or not,— the nebular theory of the universe.

Conceive of a time when the space now occupied by the solar system was filled with the fire-mist. It is revolving. As it revolves, it forms an outermost ring, which is flung off. It tumbles into a globe, and becomes the farthermost planet in space. It revolves and flings off rings, which become its satellites. In the course of time another one is flung off, and becomes Jupiter and then Saturn; and so on, planet after planet, until we come to the last that to-day circles around the sun. Millions of years go by; and this little earth of ours cools, until it becomes in some mysterious way inhabited by what we call life. Millions of years go by, and this life climbs,

— fish, reptile, bird, mammal, early man,— three or four hundred thousand years ago. Then man begins to study and think. He discovers language, the arts, the sciences, one after another, until very recently — as compared with the period in his life here on earth — he learns how to record his thoughts; and we have history, so that we know what has taken place. And this man climbs,— climbs up into heart, climbs up into conscience, climbs up into brain, climbs up into spiritual nature,— and discovers his kinship with God; and we have the great seers and sages of the past,— Confucius, the Buddha, Socrates, prince and crown of them all the Man of Nazareth, and all those that have loved and followed him since his day,— all the poems that have been written, the songs that have been sung, the symphonies and oratorios that have been composed, the pictures painted, the statues wrought out of the marble, the great cities, buildings erected.

What is it that the mighty Magician seems to be attempting to attain? Reaching through the ages after millions of years of preparation, can we believe that it is all for the sake of nothing at all? that, when all these wonders have been wrought out, this little earth is to tumble into the sun, and the sun is to begin the work of evolving other planets, or is to tumble into some other sun, or that we are to float forever, frozen, through sunless space?

I say an outcome like this seems so utterly inadequate, so little worth while, that it is insanity to believe it. If the universe has a meaning, it has a meaning that only the immortal life can crown and illustrate. So this immortal life matches the brain, the intellect, of man: it only meets man's thought, and gives it worthy and fitting expression.

But man is not only brain: he is conscience as well. And I cannot believe that, as the result of all the experiences of the ages, this conscience of ours has been wrought out merely to worry and trouble us, that it has no meaning, that there is nothing in the universe to match our sense of right and justice. Is there not a grand meaning in that old say-

ing of one of the sacred writers, "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" In our attempt to magnify God and exalt his sovereignty we sometimes forget what I think we have a right to speak of with tender, solemn, reverent feeling,—the responsibility which goes with divine sovereignty. "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" Is not the Infinite Goodness and the Infinite Justice under any obligation,—obligation to us, under obligation at any rate to himself? He cannot do wrong; and what does that mean? It means, I think,—and I ask you, if you have any question about it, to think it through, and see if you do not agree with me,—it means that God is under infinite obligation to see to it that every sentient life that he brings into being shall find that life on the whole and in the long run a good, and not an evil.

But what do we see as we look over the face of society? Let me instance one or two illustrations as typical: you can think them out in a hundred ways for yourself. Here is a little boy, born in a city slum. Before he knows the meaning of words, he is profane; before he knows the meaning of property, he is a thief; before he knows the meaning of purity, he is befouled; before he knows the meaning of home, he is an outcast; before he knows the meaning of citizenship, he feels the power of the State only to crush him; before he knows the meaning of religion, he sees it allied with the prosperity of the rich. He has had no opportunity to know father-love or mother-love or God-love, or State care, or anything human. He lives the life of a criminal, is executed perhaps at last for murder.

What does justice say of a case like that? I am not now finding fault. I have no time to go into a question so large as human society and its dealing with a question like this. Whether just or not, in the last analysis, society must protect itself against hyenas and tigers, whether they be human or from the jungle. I am speaking now of Divine Justice. It seems to me that a character like that could come with

a clean, clear case to the foot of the throne, and plead with the All-justice, to say nothing of the All-tenderness or the All-love, for at least another chance.

And so, as you look over the world in a thousand different directions, you meet with the same problem or problems similar to this,— pain, suffering unbearable almost, that the person who is afflicted by it never deserves. We are all bound up together,— probably it is better so; but the people that suffer the most in this world are not the ones that, so far as we can see, generally deserve it the most. And so we say the universe is a moral tangle. It is a moral tangle, if this world be all. If there be no God, if we are simply in the hands of a blind fate, if all there is is matter and force, why, whether it is just or not, there is no use in talking about it; for we have no court in which we can enter our appeal, and we must bear it as best we may.

But if there be God, then does not conscience demand the immortal life as an answer to all these great ethical enigmas that so perplex us here? If there be another opportunity, time and chance for all, then what matters it, this life so brief, a passing cloud, a shadow across the sun, like the swift ships as the old Psalmist says, like the grass that grows up in the morning and is cut down in the evening. Those of us who have lived fifty or sixty years know what a little while it is. It is just a little while. So, if there is another time and chance for all, then it does not matter much whether we are sick or well, whether we are rich or poor, whether we suffer pain or are free from it. It only matters that we learn the meaning of life, learn to be loving and tender and true. For all ethical problems may find their solution if the light breaks through the clouds on the farther verge of life's horizon, and reveals the glory and brilliance and beauty of another career.

Then there is one other characteristic of this human nature of ours that is matched and mated by this immortal

life. And that is the heart of man. You remember that old Bible verse, "Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted for her children because they were not." If it be true that those we have loved and who have gone away from us "are not," then can we be comforted? When I am very brave, as I am sometimes, I find myself ready to say, I am glad I have had those that I have loved so much, even if I were never to see them again; but, when I am not very brave, I cannot say it; for it becomes a haunting memory, and the heart longs and aches until I would gladly blot out the beauty of the past to forget the pain.

Since publishing my book "Life beyond Death," I do not know how many hundreds of heart-breaking letters have come to me. And one thing is striking and peculiar,— they come from every phase of belief. I think I get as many letters from people belonging to the old-time churches,— more than I do from anybody else,— people who have been from their childhood taught that they believed, people who supposed they believed, people who in the superficial way in which those things go did believe. And yet these letters show that, when the strain comes, the hawser breaks, and the ship is afloat in the fog on the wide waste seas.

I had a letter the other day from a lady in Washington. She said: I had one child, a son, my only child. He had just graduated at Harvard, and was in his first year in the Law School; and in a week or two he is gone, and my faith, my hope, my life, are gone with the boy. Which way shall I look, and what shall I do? Is there any way of knowing? Can you tell me where I can find satisfaction? Is there any whisper out of the Unseen? If I could only know that he lived, then life would be bearable to me.

This is the cry,—the cry like that old pitiful one out of the chamber over the gate, where the Israelite king climbed in his agony when the news came, and, bowing his head over his broken heart, exclaimed, "O Absalom, my son, my

son Absalom! would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!" This is the cry that goes up under every sky, out of every religion, from every home.

I stepped into a hotel corridor two days ago here in this city, just a little ways from this church. A lady spoke to me, whose story I have known for a little time. Her only son, a brilliant, promising, ambitious young man, went to Manila, and in two or three weeks — gone. She was an Episcopalian. I speak of this simply to show how the human heart cries for certainty, no matter under what name. And she said to me: If I only knew, if I could only be sure! But these old beliefs slip from my hands. I cannot grasp or hold them. I get no comfort, no certainty. I had expected to live my life over again in my boy. Now my life is ended. I have nothing to live for, nothing to hope for. If I could only know that he was alive somewhere, I could wait, I could be patient.

This is the heart cry of the world. And can we doubt that it means something very, very real? If, indeed, God be not, if we are whirled and blown through the drear and desolate spaces between the worlds at the gust of meaningless and careless forces, then we must weep our hearts out until we go back to dust, and all in vain.

But, if God be, why should he torture us with such loves, — loves like as himself, loves divinest of all things that be, loves that make earth, loves the dreams of which only make heaven,— why should he torture us with these if there be not some reality grander than our dream? I believe — yea, friends, I think that I know — there is a grander reality. The husband that went away leaving his wife, one year, two, ten, twenty, perhaps, feeling that life means little since he went, he is there. The son, the beautiful daughter, the little child, grown up, trained, educated, developed into beauty of character and life over there: all the great, the good, the noble over there. And, when we have found and clasped again to our hearts those that we have loved so tenderly

here, and have time to look around us, can we not say with Socrates, What a delight it will be to meet the great and the good and talk with them, and ask them questions?

How I would love to sit down for a little with my favorite poets and talk with them, with those whose paintings I have specially admired, with those whose music has most stirred my heart and lifted my soul! How I would like to talk with those who shaped the young destinies of the human race, and how I would love to meet those elder spirits who have made the history perhaps of other worlds, but kin to us, brothers in spirit and brain and heart, because we are all children of the one Father, the one Infinite Spirit of Life! How we shall love these associations and experiences!

And, then, there are the books I have dreamed for years of getting time to read, places I have dreamed I might some day visit, work I have hoped some time I might accomplish! Think of the blessedness of infinite leisure, of knowing that there is going to be time enough for everything, to sit down with one's friends.

I think I told you a year ago of what Edward Everett Hale said to me in a letter once. There is pathos as well as a touch of humor about it. He said, "When we have been in heaven for a few æons, and had time to get rested and look around a little while, I hope to be able to sit down with you and talk over some things I have given up expecting to reach here." Think of what this immortal life means. Matching all that is in us, our grandest hopes and our sweetest dreams!

Then let us, in the midst of these Easter flowers and while the hope in one way or another, whether according to our intellectual conception or not, is being sung and chanted and celebrated in churches all over Christendom,— let us clasp it to our hearts. And let us clasp it to our hearts all the more reverently and tenderly, and with a deeper conviction, because it is not confined to Christendom. This Easter hope, this Easter celebration, the Easter memorials, the Easter

symbols, are as old as humanity and as wide as the race. This which we Christians celebrate in our special way is only our method of voicing the universal human hope, the hope which God our Father has whispered to the heart of his waiting and loving and trusting child man.

Father, we bless Thee for this hope of immortality; we cherish it; we believe it; we will walk in the light of it until the shadows flee away and that light dawns that is never to set in darkness again. Amen.

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LEARNING TO BE CONTENT.

For a text I have chosen the words to be found in the Epistle to the Philippians, the fourth chapter, the last part of the eleventh verse,—"For I have learned in whatsoever state I am, therein to be content."

John Ruskin is reported to have said that the most noticeable characteristic of this age is the fact that, whatsoever any people have, they all want something more, and, wherever they happen to be, they all wish to be somewhere else. That is, as he looks over the face of society, restlessness, a lack of appreciation of what one possesses, of where one is, a desire to try something else, seems to him the main characteristic of the people.

Do we really believe that Paul had learned in whatsoever state he was therein to be content? A wonderful man if he had learned it. How many people since his day have learned the lesson? How many of us even catch a glimpse of that state of mind as something some day to be attained? And yet, as we look at the life of Paul, it could not have been an easy thing for him to learn the lesson. If there is any one character in the New Testament who is distinguished for headlong impetuosity, for eagerness, for the desire to achieve, that man was Paul; and, as we look over the story of his life, we are struck by the fact that he possessed almost nothing that ordinary people are accustomed to think of as necessary to contentment.

We know, of course, practically nothing about his early life, what sort of a home he had. We only know that he was taught a trade, and expected to earn his living by it, as he actually did. We know that he was educated ac-

cording to the finest ideals of that day, being brought up under one of the most famous masters of the age. But at the very outset of his career he met with a shock of disappointment which changed the tenor of his own life. He was a Hebrew of the Hebrews, as he says, and proud of his heritage,— a Pharisee of the Pharisees. He believed in the divine mission and the inherited ideals of his race; and yet in his young manhood he is met with a shock, an experience which reverses all his ideas and compels him to turn his back on everything that he loved, everything he cared for. Henceforth he is an outcast from family and friends. He never had a home. He wandered from city to city, from one end of the earth to the other. He never had any money, he never had any social position. He was looked upon by the society both of Jerusalem, Antioch, and Rome, as one of the contemptible, an outcast of the earth.

I do not know quite how to illustrate his condition any better than to say that, if a man to-day in the first society in New York should ally himself publicly and conspicuously with the Mormons or with the most contemptible sect of the Spiritualists, he would put himself very much in the position that Paul did by becoming a Christian. No wise men, no famous men, no great men, were Christians in those days. Paul says himself that they were looked upon as the offscouring of the earth. He allied himself with this common sect that was everywhere spoken against.

Then Paul's life was not entirely an easy one, even with his Christian fellows and followers. Among the perils that he met he enumerates those that came from the false brethren, from the professing Christians of the time.

Paul did not have any personal characteristics of which he could be proud. He was, so tradition tells us, a little, insignificant-looking man. He had some defect which he speaks of as a "thorn in the flesh," which the critics tell us was probably seriously defective eyesight, which not only interfered with the use of his eyes, but became even a

blemish on his personal appearance. We know he wrote very little with his own hand; for, when he does, he calls attention to it, as though it was something unusual. He prayed that this thorn in the flesh might be taken away; but it was not.

He was not even a popular orator, in the ordinary sense of that word; for he says that his enemies said this about him: "His letters are powerful; but his bodily presence is weak, and his speech contemptible." That was the way he was looked upon by the people of his time; and as he travelled over the earth, founding churches, revisiting them again, settling disputes, arranging matters of ecclesiastical order, he was the tireless servant of the dissatisfied people among whom he spent his life.

He never married. As I said, he had no home. Never were children playing about his feet. Never was the music of their prattle in his ears. Never did he delight to watch the unfolding life of son or daughter. Never was he able to look forward to renewing his youth in the success of those who should be called by his name. He was in danger as he travelled from robbers. Five times, he tells us, he received thirty-nine lashes. Over and over again he was stoned, persecuted, and driven from one place to another. Shipwrecked, once spending a whole night and day in the sea, every kind of affliction beset him. And yet this is the man who says, "I have learned in whatsoever state I am, therein to be content." A song of contentment. He is the one who speaks of Jesus, and says "who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame."

As you read his letters, as you trace his life, in spite of all these disabilities, difficulties, and sorrows, it reads like a triumphal march; and at the end, although he spends two years in prison in Rome, and is beheaded at the last, we never think of him as defeated. We hear, rather, out of the prison and above the mob that surrounded his execution, that great cry,—"To die is gain, to depart and be with

Christ is far better." A strange life, is it not? A strange life in which to look for an example of peace, content, of satisfaction. And yet he is the one who holds himself up to us as an example. Let us look, then, a little more intimately into the life of this Paul for a moment, and see if we can find any reasonable basis for this calm, this peace of his. What was it that made him content?

In the first place, I am not now saying as to whether we can look at our lives, or even his, in precisely the same way in which he regarded it — in the first place, he believed that the life he was living was under a divine commission, that he had been appointed, set apart, to do some special thing in the world, and he was doing it; and no matter in the midst of what difficulties, what sickness or trial or persecution, or in the face of whatever obstacles, he was carrying out his divine commission. He had heard the voice of the persecuted, crucified, living Christ ordering him to go and preach his gospel, setting him apart as the last and greatest of the apostles, commissioning him to found churches, to establish his kingdom among men, to break down all barriers of religion and race and language, and to help on the time when all men under every sky should be brothers and sisters, because they were the children of the one Father in heaven. This Paul believed with his whole soul, without any question or doubt.

Do you not see, then, with what poise and self-possession he might carry on his work? Suppose an ambassador of England, dealing with some of the petty tribes of Asia, meets obstacles. Suppose he is looked upon with contempt by the people with whom he deals, they not appreciating the majesty and the power of the country that he serves. His heart is full of the thought of the power behind him; and he knows that he represents a greatness and glory that puts to shame all the pretensions of the petty princes and principalities about him. He then can be calm, untroubled, assert the authority of the kingdom that he speaks for, and

even suffer any amount of persecution, knowing that he is thus fulfilling the commission that is assigned him.

This is the way Paul looked upon this world. What if people did despise the cross? The cross was the one thing in which he professed to glory. Suppose the Greeks, with their worldly wisdom, regarded his mission as all foolishness. To him it was the wisdom of God. He felt, in other words, that his life had a divine meaning running through it, that there was a grand purpose in it all; and that, you will agree with me, was enough to give him peace, was enough to give him a sense of victory over all obstacles, was enough to enable him to face the prison and the axe without blenching or turning back.

And, then, Paul believed a grander thing still. He believed that which gave him victory over death itself. Not only was his life here a divine mission, but he felt that he knew that, when he was through here, there awaited him "a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory"; and he sums up all the evils, all the difficulties, all the hardships of this life, and says, "They are not worthy to be compared to the glory that shall follow." This was the Pauline outlook over the world.

He believed that this Jesus who had gone down to the underworld on the afternoon of the crucifixion had reappeared, and that he had seen him; that he was alive; that he had withdrawn for a little while into the heavens, but that he was coming again; that he was going to establish here on earth the perfect kingdom of righteousness,— the kingdom of God; and that he, Paul, having given himself through these years of ministry and suffering to his appointed work was to share in the glory of that divine revealing.

Do you not see, then, that nothing could daunt a man like that? He believed in God. He believed that his life was a divine appointment of God, with a divine purpose in it; and he believed that death, whenever it came, was only

a triumph for him, and, instead of being the end of his life, was just the beginning of a grander and finer life.

Do you not see that right in here is the secret of the victory of the early Church? What did the Christians care for martyr fires? What did they care for the wild beasts in the arena? What did they care for the wrath of the emperors and the rabble of Rome? What did they care for sickness, for hunger, for cold, for perils by sea or land, for robbers, for anything? Nothing could harm them. They were the selected children of the Father; and all things in this world were theirs, and the future a scene to them of unspeakable victory and glory. No wonder that Paul could say, then, "I have learned in whatsoever state I am, therein to be content."

But we are not Pauls. We are not living in the early part of the first century. We are here at the end of the nineteenth. Our outlook on the universe is changed. Most of us could not state our beliefs about God or the world or Christ or the kingdom of God, its triumph here or its outlook in the future, in the words of Paul. What meaning, then, has his life for us? What is the use of my raising this illustration, and asking you to contemplate it this morning? Is there any point of view which we can assume that shall give us the content, the peace, the triumph that were in the heart of Paul? I believe that we have not only as good a reason for trust and contentment as had he, but that our thought of God and the universe and the outlook for the race may be even finer than the vision that haunted and glorified the future to him.

Let me say, however, paradoxical though it may seem, that in one sense, and that a very important one, we ought not to be content. Paul was not content in this sense. He is the one who said, "Forgetting the things that are behind, and reaching forth toward the things that are before, I press toward the mark." None of us can be wise enough, none of us can be good enough, none of us can do

enough for our fellow-men, none of us can reach a point where we are able to say, "Now we have done enough: let us rest, and be at peace." In that sense, we have no right to be content; and it is because this human race could be caricatured in the words of Ruskin — it is because this human race is restless, and never through — that we can look forward with confidence to the glorious things that are to be achieved and accomplished in the future.

In these spring days the whole world is restless. If we listened with keen enough ears, we could hear the sap coming up through the roots and out into the branches of the trees, we could hear every little tiny life struggling, striving to expand itself.

> "We hear life murmur, or see it glisten;
> Every clod feels a stir of might,
> An instinct within it that reaches and towers,
> And, groping blindly above it for light,
> Climbs to a soul in grass and flowers."

The whole world is restless under the divine impulse reaching up and out towards the unfolding of new and grander life. So all souls, all men who are touched with the life of God, are ambitious with God for higher and nobler and finer things.

But there is a kind of content, the divinest and sweetest, which goes along with this divine discontent,— content with things as they are in process, reaching towards something finer and better. Suppose I should hold in my hand a rosebud, and feel dissatisfied because it does not burst into bloom. Would it not be wiser for me to recognize the matchless beauty of it as a bud, and, while not wishing it to stay a bud forever, enjoy its beauty, catch the slight changes as it goes through its process of unfolding, until it becomes full blown in all its beauty? So in the morning, as I see the twilight in the east, do I need to be impatient to see the sun over the hills? I know the sun is coming

over the hills in the regular order of God's appointing. Let me, then, rejoice in the first delicate tints and flushes of the dawn, see the beauty in all this, moment by moment as it changes, increases, deepens, then fades; then, as the sun comes up, let me welcome him and glory in the sunrise; then hour by hour, as the shadows precede the sun, watch his course, until high noon and the beauty of high noon, and the light going away down in the deepest and darkest of the valleys. Then let me not repine because the sun slopes and goes westering towards the afternoon. When the evening comes, let me not perpetually sigh because it is not morning again: let me rejoice in the beauty of the evening; and, when the glory of the sunset comes, let me not lose heart, as though God had lost his hold on the universe because the sun is going down. The sun never goes down except to me. My sunset is always the sunrise of somebody else; and even my sunset means that grander and more suggestive glory of the stars, the revelation of a million suns glorifying other systems and other worlds.

So let me learn to take the beauty of each moment, the beauty of each hour, as it comes, as it passes,— rejoice in the brightness. Not that I would have them stay, but catch the fleeting, flitting beauty and good as it goes. So live by the hour, live, rather, by the moment.

I have advocated for a good many years the idea of living by the day, and have suggested to people what seems surprising at first,— that nobody ever lived except to-day. There never was any other time except to-day: there never will be any other time except to-day. Yesterday does not exist; and to-morrow does not exist. The only time when you will ever do anything, the only time when you will ever enjoy anything, the only time when you will ever go anywhere, is to-day. Learn to live by the day, and rejoice in the good things of to-day.

There are mothers who forget this lesson in regard to their children. The babe is born and lies in her bosom,

and sometimes the mother begins to dream of when it shall get out of long dresses into short ones; longs for the first spoken word, longs for the first tottering step, forgetting to rejoice in the beauty of each day as it passes; longs to see her boy grown up. And then, the minute he goes away and builds a home of his own, the forward look turns to memory; and she spends the rest of her life wishing he was a boy again. Would it not be wiser to take the beauty and joy of each hour, each day, as it passes, instead of letting ourselves be deluded by dreams of the past or dreams of the future? Let us learn, then, to live by the day, and be contented with to-day as a part of the process that is going on towards the higher and finer things of which we sometimes dream and for which we are laboring.

There is another thing which I wish to suggest in a word, in passing, that interferes with our comfort. That is the conceit which demands more of the universe than we have any right to expect. Have I any right to claim personal beauty or mighty intellect, the imagination of a poet, the power of a sculptor. Have I any right to claim a certain definite amount of wealth? Have I any right to claim social position, political office,— any of these many prizes which the world makes the object of its striving? Before I came into being at all, I had no right to claim existence. Mere living, the ability to open these eyes and look upon the wonders of the universe, to breathe the air, to feel the wind on my forehead, to look at the stars, on the faces of friends, to clasp the hand of those I love,— all this wonder that makes up life I had no claim on. It was given me.

And am I wise, through my personal conceit and my demand that something else shall be mine, to fling away the beauty and the glory of it all, that which I possess, because I do not possess something else? Is this wise? Is this right? Let me be grateful for what I have. Let me see the beauty and glory of the things that are about me. There is wonder enough to bring any man upon his knees in any

commonest, barest spot on earth, if he only had eyes to see and ears to hear and sensitiveness to appreciate.

Let me illustrate what I mean. Scotland was a bare and unattractive country, foggy, misty, with its moors and dreary hills, with its lakes, beautiful enough, but no more beautiful than those in a good many other parts of the world. Who would have thought it a wonderland if it had not been for men like Scott and Burns? Scott and Burns wrote about it; and now the world makes pilgrimages there to see — what? To see what was there all the time, but which nobody saw until Scott and Burns told them how to see. The little timorous beastie, the mouse whose nest was overthrown by the plow, was there before Burns. The little daisy, crushed in the process of the farmer's work in the spring, was there before, a hundred, a thousand years; but Burns looked with the poet's eye, and he saw the glory, the beauty, the glamour, "the light that never was on sea or land." And since then we can see; and we go and tread in the poet's footsteps and look and marvel.

But wherever you go, in your common door-yard, your place in the country, at the seashore, in the mountains, wherever you are, there is God's earth, God's grass, God's flowers, God's insects, God's beautiful forms of life all around you, and all poetry and marvel, if you only open your eyes and look. But, instead of looking and seeing there, you dream of wonderlands in Italy or Norway or Brazil or California or somewhere else; and the people who live in Italy and Norway and California are living just the same blind and stupid lives that you are, and dreaming of some other part of the world. We do not teach ourselves to see, to feel, to hear, to understand. The world is full of divine voices, only let us listen. Learn, then, to appreciate the things around you where you are, and not be discontented because you have not something else.

But now let us ask whether we can go a little further. Can we get our feet on the solid rock on which Paul sup-

posed himself to stand? I believe, friends, that, in the midst of all the science and supposed scepticism and question of the modern world, you and I have a right to regard life as a divine mission. You have just as much opportunity to lead a divinely appointed life as had Paul. There are only two suppositions about this universe that anybody can frame. One is that God does not exist; that we have only the universe, forces, and matter to deal with. The other is that God does exist.

Now, on the theory that God does not exist, you and I have it in our power to be unspeakably better than the universe is. We have learned what kindness means, and tenderness and love; and, whether God exists or not, we can be divine in the place where we are. We can make life a little better for those we deal with. We can clear out an obstacle from somebody's path, so that he may not stumble and fall. We can throw a little light on somebody's way, so he can see where safely to set his foot. We can help somebody solve a perplexing problem. We can lighten a burden that is crushing some one. We can help remove one from the shoulder that is chafed and worn; and let the bearer rest a little, even if he must resume it. We can make life easier, better, sweeter for somebody than it is now; and that is the divinest thing on earth.

And, if God exists, then my life is a part of his plan, and your life is a part of his plan; and your life and my life are necessary to his plan. General Grant never fought a battle alone. He needed every man in the army. Suppose he called an orderly, and gave him a message to one of his officers on a distant part of the field. Perhaps the whole battle for the moment turned on that. The orderly, then, in delivering his message, was as important as Grant. He was a part of the victory; and the common soldier, who filled his place faithfully, it is he that won the day; the sentinel away out on his lonely post, with nobody watching, grander, nobler

in being true unwatched than he would wedged in the ranks where he would find disobedience almost impossible. We common people, not very important,— we have an opportunity of leading a life that is all divine. We are a part of God's plan. What does it mean? According to the light that is given to me, I must do the duty that lies next before me, not worrying over the past in which I have failed, not worrying about the next step that I have not come to yet. I must do the immediate thing that lies at my hand; and, in doing that, I am doing as much as the brightest angel that stands before God's throne. I am doing the divinely appointed, divinely commissioned thing; and, while I am engaged in that work, there is no such thing as failure possible.

There is no power in heaven or earth that can really injure a man except himself. There is no power in the universe that can take away from any man the best things; for the best things are his integrity, his honor, his truth, his faithfulness, his manliness, his consecration to truth, to right, to service, his love, his tenderness, his care, his aspiration. These things loss of property cannot touch, loss of health cannot touch, loss of social position cannot touch, being an outcast and being treated with contempt by the world cannot touch. Nothing can touch these things. Even God cannot injure a noble man; for he cannot do that which is inconsistent with himself, and no other power has any ability to make his life a failure.

Have we no right, then, in the midst of disappointment, trial, sickness, trouble, to feel that we can take some steps, at any rate, in the process of learning to be content? I know it seems like a hard word to people who have lost children, to a wife who has lost a husband, to a husband who has lost a wife. It seems a hard saying to one who has spent years of illness and suffering, who is cut off from the ordinary avenues of the world's occupations; but I have one or two cases in mind that I will just suggest as illustrations, rapidly, in passing.

I know a delicate, dainty, lovely lady who for the last two or three years has been in almost constant pain, several times in the hospital, hardly free from suffering for a moment; and yet she said to me not long ago, "I would not take it back if I could." And she is not through it yet. Why? She says, "I have learned such deep things as to the meaning of life, I have had such experiences of what people call religion, I have learned such sympathy, such tenderness towards suffering, I have learned what the inner things of life mean in such a way that I would not take it back if I could." She has learned to be content.

I met an old gentleman, who is now over eighty, in a neighboring city, not a great while ago, who in a humorous sort of fashion, and yet in a wonderful way, touched one of these deep secrets of content. He had lost all his property in his old age, had to move into a little house in a side street, and is now just struggling to get on to the end. One of his friends made him a visit not long after his loss, and found him cheery and sunny and bright; and he said: "How is this? How can you keep up your courage? How can you cultivate such contentment and peace?" And the old man smiled humorously, and said: "Why, it's all I've got. It isn't worth anything, is it? If it was worth anything in the market, I should have had to turn it in with the other assets; but, as long as it isn't, I guess I'll keep it." Hopeful philosophy of life, his cheer, his contentment, his courage, — all that he had; but he could keep it. Money could go; but the man stood grounded.

If I had time, I would like to read you some extracts from the last man you would ever think of as a teacher of religion, — Walt Whitman. He says of the poise and peace that came to him, "My feet are mortised and tenoned in granite." He expresses a superb confidence in the universe, and says that, if everything were reduced to its original elements, he believed that all would come round again, and, whatever happens, he can look forward to the highest

and best possible, because the destiny of the eternal God must be carried out. And he does not worry himself about other worlds. He looks upon the great constellations; and he says, They are well as they are, but I am well also where I am. This old earth is just as near to the mystery and glory and beauty of God as the most shining star in the blue of evening.

So I have known a great many people in my life who have been sick, who have lost friends, who have lost almost everything, and yet who have grown so sweet, so tender, so trustful, so loving, that they have become glorified by the processes of pain they have passed through, and have learned in whatsoever state they were, therein to be content.

And, if we believe, as I do and as I feel sure that the most of you do, that the outcome is to be grander than anybody can dream, then, as I have said to you more than once before, the process ought not to take the heart out of us. If I know I am to arrive at some magnificent end, why, then, I can bear the hardships by the way, I can be patient with them. So, if we have lost our friends, and if life seems dark and lonely, let us at least learn to be patient. I want to read you two verses from Longfellow that seem to me so sweet in their suggestion that I cannot pass them by: —

> "And though, at times impetuous with emotion
> And anguish long suppressed,
> The swelling heart heaves moaning like the ocean,
> That cannot be at rest,
>
> "Let us be patient! These severe afflictions
> Not from the ground arise,
> But oftentimes celestial benedictions
> Assume this dark disguise."

And, as we come towards the end, may we not learn that sweet lesson that Whittier had so beautifully learned? I remember what a delight it was to me to talk with Whittier

in his old days, the storm and struggle of his life behind him. It had been a lonely life: love had left him disappointed in his youth; but he turned that into sweetness, and not into gall. His life had been a lonely one, but he had fought a good fight, and kept the faith; and, as he sat there, he sang:—

"I long for household voices gone,
For vanished smiles I long;
But God hath led my dear ones on,
And He can do no wrong.

"And so beside the silent sea
I wait the muffled oar:
No harm from Him can come to me
On ocean or on shore."

If we can sit thus beside the silent sea, waiting the muffled oar, waiting for the boat to come and take us that has already taken out into the mist one after another of the faces we are hungering again to see, why, then, looking back over all these experiences of the past, looking forward to the outcome that is to justify it all, may we not say, in the words of the old apostle, "I have learned in whatsoever state I am, therein to be content."

Dear Father, it is a hard lesson; but let us try to learn it. Let us look down deeply into the meaning of things, and let us look on high for the gleams and promises of life; and so let us find strength to trust and wait. Amen.

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INTRODUCTION.

The preface by Mr. Savage gives the reasons, clearly and concisely, why a book like this is needed. It answers a great demand, and it will supply a serious deficiency. Having had the privilege of reading the contents very thoroughly, I gladly record my satisfaction in the character of the work, my hope of its wide acceptance and use, my appreciation of the author's motives in preparing it. The questions and answers allow of supplementing, of individual handling, of personal direction. It is not a hard-and-fast production. There is a large liberty of detail, explanation, and unfolding. The doctrinal positions are in accord with rational religion and liberal Christianity, the critical judgments are based on modern scholarship, and the great aim throughout is to assist an inquirer or pupil to a positive, permanent faith. If any one finds comments and criticisms which at first sight seem needless, let it be remembered that a Unitarian catechism must give reasons, point out errors, and trace causes: it cannot simply dogmatize. I am sure that in the true use of this book great gains will come to our Sunday-schools, to searchers after truth, to our cause.

EDWARD A. HORTON

AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

This little Catechism has grown out of the needs of my own work. Fathers and mothers have said to me, "Our children are constantly asking us questions that we cannot answer." Perfectly natural! Their reading and study have not been such as to make them familiar with the results of critical scholarship. The great modern revolution of thought is bewildering. This is an attempt to make the path of ascertained truth a little plainer.

This is the call for help in the home. Besides this, a similar call has come from the Sunday-school. Multitudes of teachers have little time to ransack libraries and study large works. This is an attempt, then, to help them, by putting in their hands, in brief compass, the principal things believed by Unitarians concerning the greatest subject.

The list of reference books that follows the questions and answers will enable those who wish to do so to go more deeply into the topics suggested.

It is believed that this Catechism will be found adapted to any grade of scholars above the infant class, provided the teacher has some skill in the matter of interpretation.

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Life Beyond Death

Being a Review of the World's Beliefs on the Subject, a Consideration of Present Conditions of Thought and Feeling, leading to the Question as to whether it can be demonstrated as a Fact.

To which is added an Appendix containing Some Hints as to Personal Experiences and Opinions.

By MINOT J. SAVAGE, D.D.

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Ian Maclaren and the Presbyterian Creed

BY

REV. ALBERT LAZENBY
UNITY CHURCH, CHICAGO

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IAN MACLAREN AND THE PRESBYTERIAN CREED.

"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." — MATT. vii. 21.

IT is a matter of supreme interest to us, and should be a matter of great encouragement as well, that that large, influential body, the Presbyterian Church, is just discovering, after two hundred and fifty years' trial, that you cannot hold a church together by means of a creed. They have been long in discovering this, but they are discovering it; and they are finding out that the mere attempt to hold men together is really losing them some of their best brain and best life. It is admitted that the Westminster Confession is an anachronism. As a symbol of unity, it is of no more value than a rope of sand; and, as a confession, it is rather a confession of unfaith than a confession of faith. It is said that ninety per cent. of the ministers reject it, and how many of the laity it is impossible to say. I say we ought to find great encouragement in this. It is a confirmation of the principles for which we stand. For ages we have been protesting against the imposition of a creed either upon an individual or a church. Sixty years ago Martineau pointed out the folly of asking ministers to clothe themselves in these ancient symbols of faith. It was like asking a modern warrior to go into battle clothed in the armor of antiquity. This these ministers are finding out. They feel that these statements hamper the full action of their minds. Channing talked himself hoarse declaring you cannot

shut the light of God's truth within the limits of a creed, and in one of the finest passages that ever fell from the lips of man he affirmed the charter of spiritual freedom. Long have we felt that creeds are opposed to progress. At the best, they can only represent the thought of the average; and the thought of the average never rises to flood-tide. It is but a mixture of the half-intelligent and the partially informed, together with the prejudice and narrowness. It cannot, in the nature of things, stand always for the best. All this apart from the contents of these creeds.

This has been our protest and the grounds of our protest. And now it would seem as if that protest had not been in vain. Men are coming to see that there is something in this position, after all. At any rate, they are coming to recognize that, as a pledge of faith and symbol of unity, the Westminster Confession is not worth the parchment it is written on. However true it may have been to the thought of the past, it is no longer true to the thought of the present; and they are asking that it be put aside, that it be relegated to the place where it belongs,— the museum of antiquities. Numbers of men who have signed this Confession as a confession of their faith, now tell us that they have signed it — not as a confession of their faith, but as a confession of the faith the Church once believed. The devil could sign that, and lie not.

To ease their consciences, however, some would eradicate all Calvinism from the Confession. They would thereby eradicate all that for which the Presbyterian Church has so long stood. Presbyterianism without Calvinism would be like "Hamlet" without the Prince. Others ask for a new creed. We must have a new creed, says Dr. Parkhurst,— the shorter, the better,— a creed which does not confound Christianity with theology; and he gives us a specimen of the creed he would have. He quotes the passage: "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not

perish, but have everlasting life." There, he says, that is enough creed for a Christian. "In this verse we have the doctrine of God's love, of human guilt, of Christ's divinity, of salvation through him, of faith in him, of immortality." But, pray, what is that but theology? Every clause in that is theological; and yet we are told that they must have a creed which does not confound Christianity with theology.

This does but illustrate the difficulties that beset all creed-making. Even these men have not discerned the real inwardness of this crisis. When will they come to see that you cannot have a creed which shall compass all the fulness of spiritual experience? When will they come to recognize that the human soul, alive with the quickening power of God's love and aflame with the inspirations of his truth, is forever bursting these bonds? When will they come to learn that the wind of God makes music through other organs besides theirs? And when will they come to confess that it is deed, and not creed, which shall save a man?

For just what is a Christian? And here let me give you the answer of a Presbyterian. "Ian Maclaren," or John Maclaren Watson, is the leading light in the English Presbyterian Church. He is a Scotchman, and has acquired a world-wide reputation. His readers in this country can be numbered by the tens of thousands. He is far and away the most outstanding man in all sections of the Presbyterian Church. His words have a particular interest at the present time. There is something strangely familiar in his interpretation of the sayings of Jesus. One might almost call it a re-echo of Channing. In his statement of the Christian's creed, *e.g.*, theology and dogma have altogether a secondary place. It is life, conduct, deed, that is all-important.

See with what thinly disguised contempt he speaks of the Church's creeds: —

"When one reads the creed which was given by Jesus and those which have been made by Christians, he cannot fail to detect an immense difference; and it does not matter

whether he select the Nicene Creed or the Westminster Confession. They all have a family likeness to each other and a family unlikeness to the Sermon on the Mount. They deal with different subjects, they move in a different atmosphere. Were the Athanasian Creed and the Beatitudes printed in parallel columns, one would find it hard to believe that both documents were virtually intended to serve the same end, to be a basis of discipleship. . . . They are constructed on different principles. When one asks, What is a Christian? the creeds and the Sermon not only do not give the same answer, but models so contradictory as to represent two types. We all know many persons who would pass as good Christians [judged] by the Sermon, and be cast out [measured] by the creeds."

And again: —

"What must strike every person about Jesus' Sermon is that it is not metaphysical, but ethical." But, "when one turns to the creeds, the situation has changed; and he finds himself in another world. They have nothing to do with character; they do not afford an idea of character; they do not ask the pledges of character; they have no place in their construction for character. From their first word to their last they are physical or metaphysical, not ethical."

Now could anything be more explicit? He is speaking of the Westminster Confession no less than of other creeds. Could anything be more calculated to weaken the authority of that Confession, and bring it into ridicule and abuse? As a minister of a Presbyterian Church he has subscribed to the Westminster Confession; and yet he speaks of it not only as not agreeing with the Sermon on the Mount, but as altogether alien in principle and spirit. It not only does not reflect Christ's teaching, but it has hampered that teaching, and hindered the spread of Christianity.

And not only does he put himself at issue with the creeds as creeds, but he also declares beliefs which are in

direct contradiction of the fundamental doctrines of the confession of faith, and even the evangelical faith. Take these utterances and compare them with the doctrines of the Church. I would commend them to the attention of those men who think that, by omitting the fore-ordination clauses and the damnation clauses from the confession of faith, they have done all that is required. Let them weigh carefully the utterances of this man, and let them consider what changes would really be needed before they can draw up a creed that shall satisfy Ian Maclaren, and I believe there are thousands of Ian Maclarens in the Presbyterian Church. But read these utterances by the side of the statements of the creed that is, and you will see that the man and the creed are worlds apart: —

The confession of faith declares that "the Son of God, the second person in the Trinity, being very and eternal God, of one substance and equal with the Father, did, when the fulness of time was come, take upon himself man's nature, . . . which person is very God and very man, yet one Christ."

That is the teaching of Presbyterianism and of the orthodox church universally on the question of the Trinity. But Ian Maclaren affirms that "Jesus did not depend on his metaphysical equality with the Father, but on his moral likeness to the Father; not on his eternal generation, but on his spiritual character." Again he says: "With Jesus the Trinity was never a metaphysical conception,— a state of being: it was an ethical fact, — a state of feeling. . . . God and Christ were one in love. Christ and man were one in love." True,— but can we call that the Trinity? Where are the three distinct and separate personalities, yet but one God? There is no personality in an "ethical fact" or "state of feeling." This is purely a misnomer, and to call this the Trinity is an abuse of history and the dictionary.

Take another question,—the all-essential doctrine of the atonement. The confession of faith declares — and all

the orthodox churches of Christendom uphold that declaration — that "Christ, by His obedience and death, did fully discharge the debt of all those that are thus justified, and did make a proper, real, and full satisfaction to His Father's justice on this behalf."

In contrast to that we have the following *obiter dicta* in the "Mind of the Master":—

"Jesus proposed to ransom the race, not by paying a price to the devil or to God, but by loosening the grip of sin on the heart and reinforcing the will. . . . Heaven is a spiritual state; and its settlement on any person, either on account of a payment in blood or money, is an absurdity."

It would be difficult to reconcile those two statements. The doctrine of the atonement as taught by the Church is not the doctrine of the atonement as held by Ian Maclaren; and no casuistry can ever make it the same.

So, also, with regard to the doctrine of faith. The confession of faith assures us that "the grace of faith, whereby the elect are enabled to believe to the saving of their souls, is the work of the spirit of Christ in their hearts"; and this is the free gift of God, and in no way a faculty of man. But Ian Maclaren declares that "Jesus did not regard faith as an arbitrary gift of the Almighty or an occasional visitant to favored persons, but as one of the senses of the soul." Which of these explanations are we to accept?

And so with respect to the divine Fatherhood. You may know what the confession of faith affirms: "All those that are justified God vouchsafeth, in and for His only Son, Jesus Christ, to make partakers of the grace of adoption."

But is this the teaching of Jesus as shown in the "Mind of the Master"? "If Jesus did not teach a divine Fatherhood embracing the Race, then He used words to conceal thought. . . . Jesus' message was, 'You are a son.' This silence [about the Fatherhood of God] from the date of the Greek Fathers to the arrival of the modern Broad

Churchman has been more than an omission: it has been a heresy." And he goes on to affirm that "the disciples of Jesus owe a debt, that can never be paid, to three men that have brought us back to the mind of our master. One was Channing, for whose love to Jesus one might be tempted to barter his belief; the second was Maurice, most honest and conscientious of theologians; and the third was Erskine of Linlathen, who preached the Fatherhood to every one he met, from Thomas Carlyle to Highland shepherds."

And so again with reference to the doctrine of election and future punishment. You know the old thing. Dr. Hillis has recently called attention to it. "By the decree of God, for the manifestation of his glory, some men and angels are predestinated unto everlasting life, and others foreordained to everlasting death." But what says this preacher of the new gospel? "No power will ever convince a reasonable being that one man should be elected to life and have heaven settled on him as an entailed estate, and another be ordained to death and be held in the way thereto, or that one be blessed because he has held the orthodox creed, and another be cursed because he has made a mistake in the most profound of all sciences. If heaven and hell — be they places or states — are made to hinge on the arbitrary will of the Almighty or on the imperfect processes of human reason, then judgment will not be a fiasco: it will be an outrage. It will be a climax of irresponsible despotism, whose monstrous injustice would leave heaven without blessing and hell without curse." And this from a Presbyterian minister! It is all that a Unitarian could say; nay, it is what the Unitarian did say when Ian Maclaren was a babe on his mother's breast. But you see how radical this man's teaching is. It not only dispenses with the doctrine of election and damnation, but it revolutionizes all that the Presbyterian and evangelical churches have held as most characteristic of Christianity.

And — in contrast to these creeds — Ian Maclaren declares

that the creed of the Christian is ethical, and not theological; that the creed of Jesus, as contained in the Sermon on the Mount, was moral, and not metaphysical. What Jesus lays stress upon are such points as these: "the Fatherhood of God over the human family; his perpetual and beneficent providence over all his children; the excellence of simple trust in God over the earthly care of this world; the obligation of God's children to be like their Father in heaven; the paramount importance of true and holy motives; the worthlessness of a merely formal righteousness; forgiveness dependent on our forgiving our neighbor; the fulfilling of the law of love; and the play of tender and passive virtues."

Can any one take exception to that? Does it not contain the very essence of Christianity? These are the utterances that are so strangely familiar to us. We have been like a voice crying in the wilderness proclaiming these things. It is the very gospel for which our fathers lived and suffered and fought. But are they so familiar to our neighbors? Compare them with the utterance of any orthodox divine: ask him what is the creed of a Christian. Read them along with that statement of Dr. Parkhurst which I have already quoted, and you feel that this man occupies a different standpoint. He moves in a different world. He breathes a different atmosphere. The evangelical faith is no longer the sole dynamic of character. A man can be a good man without it. It makes no difference to his claim to being a Christian. "Imagine," Watson says, "a body of Christians who should take their stand on the Sermon of Jesus, and conceive their creed on his lines. Imagine how it would read: 'I believe in the Fatherhood of God; I believe in the words of Jesus; I believe in the clean heart; I believe in the unworldly life; I believe in the Beatitudes; I promise to trust God and follow Christ, to forgive my enemies, and to seek after the righteousness of God.'" There — that, he declares, is the creed of the Christian, that is all the creed he wants.

And, certainly, if you must have a creed, no statement could be more brief, and none could reconcile more divergent parties. It surrenders all the old creeds and confessions and longer and shorter catechisms at one sweep, and simply puts life before faith, conduct before creed. There is nothing here of Adam's fall, or man's depravity, or the plan of salvation, or the scheme of redemption, or the doctrine of election. These are never mentioned. A man may believe them or disbelieve them just as he will. It makes no difference to his fitness as a Christian. Here in itself is a wondrous step. It brings Watson at once nearer to our side than to that of the Presbyterian or evangelical churches.

And, looking back, one can see how Ian Maclaren has been growing into this faith. In our modern liberal religion, it has been said, we mark the triumph of the noble in heart. It sees in God not less than the tenderest human love, but more, infinitely more. And well does Watson make the Fatherhood of God the final idea of God. Readers of "The Bonnie Brier Bush" will remember how this comes out in that story of Marget Howe and her son. She is one of the most gracious figures in the book, though given with fewest touches. Of more intellectual power than her neighbors, and having other thoughts and a wider horizon, she was destined to have her heart's desire — the desire of most Scottish mothers, that her only son should be a minister — dashed to the ground just when it was almost fulfilled; and she leaves upon the mind the impression of a sweet and noble woman. Let me read you this passage, not merely for the sake of the light it throws on her character, but for the reflection of that broadening view of religion of which I have spoken. Her son had fallen into a decline, and returned home only to die. There were not wanting Job's comforters, even in Drumtochty; and one Kirsty Stewart had a way in sick-visiting, consisting in a certain cadence of the voice and arrangement of the face, which was felt to be soothing and complimentary. She also held the comforting doctrine

"no to mak' idols o' our bairns, for that's naethin' else than provokin' the Almichty." Marget Howe knew God better than that, and she replied: "Did ye say the Almichty? I'm thinkin' that's ower grand a name for your God, Kirsty. What wud ye think o' a faither that brocht hame some bonnie thing frae the fair for ane o' his bairns, and, when the puir bairn wes pleased wi' it, tore it oot o' his hand and flung it into the fire? Eh, wumman, he wud be a meeserable, cankered, jealous body. Kirsty, wumman, when the Almichty sees a mither bound up in her laddie, I tell ye He is sair pleased in His heaven; for mind ye hoo He loved His ain Son. Besides, a'm judgin' that nane o' us can love anither withoot lovin' Him." The son heard all this through the open window; and, when she saw that the window was open, and that he was listening, she said, "I didna ken, Geordie."

"Never mind, mither, there's nae secrets atween us; and it gar'd my heart leap to hear ye speak up like yon for God."

Then he told her where and how he got his first real idea of a good God. He reminded her of the night when he was a boy he called to her in fright, so terrified was he by a sermon he had heard on hell.

"Ye hae no forgotten, mither, the fricht that was on me that nicht?"

"Never," said Marget, "and never can."

"Ye asked me,—

"'Am I a guid mither tae ye?' And, when I could dae naethin' but hold, ye said, 'Be sure God maun be a hantle kinder.'"

And so it is: men are coming to see that "God maun be a hantle kinder" than what the Church's creeds have shown him to be. We feel that God is higher than our highest and better than our best; and we say with John Stuart Mill: "We can call no being good who is not what we mean when we apply that term to our fellow-men; and,

if such a being can sentence us to hell for not calling him good, then to hell will we go."

But another thing: among the very best of Watson's sermons, in the Mind of the Master, is one on the "Sovereignty of Character." It is an incisive, suggestive study. In it he says: "There is nothing in which we differ so hopelessly as creed, nothing on which we agree so utterly as character. Impanel twenty men of clean conscience and average intelligence, and ask them to try some person by his opinions, and they may as well be discharged at once. Ask them to bring in the standard of conduct, and they will bring in a verdict in five minutes. Just as he approximates to the Beatitudes, they will pronounce the man good: just as he diverges, they will declare him less than good."

And this truth is emphasized in the very best story Ian Maclaren has yet written. It is a short tale of five chapters about one Dr. MacLure. He was a doctor of the old school, rough in manners and almost grotesque in figure, yet as tender as a woman with the children or in cases of suffering. He is ready to face any hardships in unflinching heroism, when he and his faithful companion and friend "Jess," the old white mare which died a week after her master, would set out, no matter what the distance, time, or weather, with the medicine and instruments that might be needed strapped upon the saddle. Poorly paid, taking simply what they could give, hard worked, he did his best for every man, woman, and child in that wild, straggling district, year in, year out, in the snow and in the heat, in the dark and in the light, without rest and without holiday for forty years. This man had made no profession of religion. He had not even been converted; and there were some in the parish who felt that it was "a peety he did not make mair profession of religion." One man did not think he had much chance of entering into the kingdom of heaven.

But Maclaren grounds this man's claim to heaven on his

own goodness. Take that prayer which Drumsheugh, the farmer, puts up for his friend: "Almichty God, . . . dinna be hard on Weelum MacLure, for he's no been hard wi' onybody in Drumtochty. . . . Be kind tae him as he's been tae us for forty year. . . . We're a' sinners afore Thee. . . . Forgive him what he's dune wrang, an' dinna cuist it up tae him . . . Mind the fouk he's helpit, . . . the weemen an' bairnies, . . . an' gie him a welcome hame, for he's sair needin' 't after a' his wark. . . . Amen." Could anything be more simple and more trustful? But it is not modelled on the old pattern. The doctor's end was in keeping with his life. Drumsheugh held his friend's hand, which now and again tightened; and, as he watched, a change came over the face on the pillow before him. The lines of weariness had disappeared, as if God's hand had passed over it, and peace began to gather around the closed eyes.

"The doctor has forgotten the toil of later years, and has gone back to his boyhood.

"'The Lord's my shepherd, I'll not want,'"

he repeated, till he came to the last verse, and then he hesitated.

"'Goodness and mercy all my life
Shall surely follow me.'

"'Follow me . . . and . . . what's next? Mither said I wes tae ha'e it ready when she cam.

"'A'll come afore ye gang tae sleep, Wullie; but ye 'ill no get yir kiss unless ye feenish the psalm.'

"'And . . . in God's house . . . for evermore my . . . hoo does it rin? A' canna mind the next word. . . . My, my—

"'It's ower dark noo tae read it, an' mither 'll sune be comin'.'

"Drumsheugh, in an agony, whispered into his ear, '"My dwelling-place," Weelum.'

"'That's it, that's it a' noo. Wha said it?'

"'And in God's house for evermore
My dwelling-place shall be.'

"'A'm ready noo, an' a'll get ma kiss when mither comes. A' wish she wud come, for a'm tired, an' wantin' tae sleep.

"'Yon's her step, . . . an' she's carryin' a licht in her hand. A' see it through the door.

"'Mither, a' ken ye wudna forget yir laddie, for ye promised tae come, an' a've feenished ma psalm.

"'And in God's house for evermore
My dwelling-place shall be.'

"'Gi'e me the kiss, mither, for a've been waitin' for ye; an' a'll sune be asleep.'

"The gray morning light fell on Drumsheugh, still holding his friend's cold hand, and staring at a hearth where the fire had died down into white ashes; but the peace on the doctor's face was of one who rested from his labors."

Now, nothing shows Watson's divergence from the old creed more forcibly than a concrete case like this. Those of the old faith hold that only through the blood of Christ can man be saved. They do not object to Maclaren praising this man of medicine, but they object to him giving him a place in the kingdom of heaven. For in all story there is no thought of the atonement, or of the redeeming blood of Christ, or of the scheme of salvation. Has it really come to this: that a man can be saved by his own merits? Is it, after all, our righteousness, our goodness, that commends us to God? We can leave Dr. Watson, or Ian Maclaren, to settle that with his friends. As for ourselves, we feel that this story is filled with the spirit of Christ. We feel that the man who finds no room in heaven for such a man as this, who did his best for the poor bodies of our suffering humanity, does not deserve to find room there for himself.

And this is the truth to which the world is coming. The one issue between the old faith and the new, between the

old churches and ourselves, is just this issue of deed as against creed. I was lecturing in a village in Scotland not long ago; and after the lecture one old man got up, and said: "The minister has been telling us where the old theology is wrong, but this is what I feel. I am an old man. I cannot expect to be here much longer. What does he offer me in place of the auld faith? What shall I have to depend on when the great change comes?" I could only answer: "Your own life, friend. If you have lived a good, honest, straightforward life, doing your best, and acting according to your best light, you need not fear the great change. As for the rest: we have a God at the other side as well as this. Let that suffice."

"Abou Ben Adhem (may his tribe increase!)
Awoke one night from a deep dream of peace,
And saw within the moonlight in his room,
Making it rich and like a lily in bloom,
An angel writing in a book of gold.
Exceeding peace had made Ben Adhem bold,
And to the presence in the room he said,
'What writest thou?' The vision raised its head,
And, with a look made of all sweet accord,
Answered, 'The names of those who love the Lord.'
'And is mine one?' said Abou. 'Nay, not so,'
Replied the angel. Abou spoke more low,
But cheerly still, and said, 'I pray thee, then,
Write me as one that loves his fellow-men.'
The angel wrote, and vanished. The next night
It came again with a great wakening light,
And showed the names whom love of God had blessed;
And, lo! Ben Adhem's name led all the rest."

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SHADOW AND SUNSHINE.

I TAKE as a text from the sixtieth chapter of the Prophecy of Isaiah the first clause of the twentieth verse,— "Thy sun shall no more go down."

Man is at the same time an inhabitant of two worlds. One is the outer material universe that we see with our eyes, and the other is the inner world of thought and feeling. Whatever else we may be, we are earth children, and have been trained as such in the midst of these earthly scenes and influences. And so our speech — whether we refer to the outer world to which I have alluded or the inner one — is figurative, and borrowed from the material universe and our sensuous dealings with it. We stand, I suppose, in a certain sense related to this material world, as a coin does to the die. We have been stamped by it; and we borrow from it our language. For example, the mind seeks standing ground or looks for some sure foundation under its foot. We talk about sunny or cloudy inner heavens, as well as outer ones. If I wish a figure by which to set forth my idea of that which is right, I must, as the best thing I know of, turn to a straight line. When I wish to refer to my life, my soul, I can do no better than to speak of breath or wind, conscious all the time that I am using a figure to set forth that which I cannot any better explain.

These inner and outer worlds are sometimes in agreement with each other, and sometimes they are in sharp contrast. I remember that my favorite poet, Lowell, in a couplet in his "Biglow Papers," humorously sets forth the idea by saying that

> "Sometimes in the fairest south-west weather
> My inner vane points east for weeks together."

The outer world and the inner do not always agree. Sometimes, when we are sad, and we wake up on a brilliant, sunny morning, we are almost resentful that Mother Nature does not seem to care what our mood may be. She laughs and smiles and sings, however our heart may be crushed, whatever may be the difficulties that environ and beset us on every hand. And sometimes the inner world is bright when the outer is sad; for some wise ones there are who have learned to master their conditions in such a way that they can see the inner sunshine, however dark the outside world may appear.

Speaking from the point of view of science, whatever power may be back of the phenomena that are around us, the sun — sunshine — is the creator of all that is fair and sweet and bright to us in our physical human life. This earth is one of the group of the sun's children. Ages and ages ago, if we accept the ordinary theory that is held by scientific men, the sun from its exuberant life flung off ring after ring, which, condensing, became the planets, one of which is this little earth of ours. And the smaller planets are the ones that are closer to the sun; for the sun, like a loving father or mother, seems to take particular care of those that would appear to be less able to care for themselves. So human is the suggestion, as we look upon the sun's family of worlds. The sun is not only the author of the globe itself, but of all the light, all the life, all the beauty that make up this earth of ours.

Let us for a moment glance at the light and the warmth with which we are familiar. No matter what the light may be, whether it comes from the moon, whether it is the light of a candle, whether it gleams from flaming coal in a grate, whether it is the beauty flashing to our entranced vision from some wonderful gem dug up in a mine, or whether it is the electric light,— whatever it may be, all the light of the world is sunshine. That which we burn in our grate as wood or coal is simply sunshine stored up in recent years

or ages and ages ago beneath the strata of the earth. That which glistens in a gem is sunshine again condensed into this wonderful crystallized form; and the sun, they tell us, is simply a tremendous dynamo of electric power, so that all the electric light of our modern world is again simply a gift from the sun. All the beauty of the world is sunshine, — the tinting of a flower, the sheen of a leaf, the simple wonder of a grass blade. Beauty of every kind is simply the work of this marvellous creative artist that we become so familiar with that we forget the wonder that is connected with his every beam. All the life of the earth is the gift of the sun. The world lies wrapped in cold and snow, asleep, while the sun is on his far journey to the south. But, when he turns and begins to come back again, the snows melt: the sleeping beauty awakes at the kiss of the bright prince. The trees, shrubs, everything thrills as his rays fall upon them. He whispers to those things that are under the snow, and life down there begins to stir by way of preparation; and, as he advances northward, the winter retreats, and greenness and life and beauty are everywhere.

They used to fable in ancient times that, when a god or goddess visited the earth, flowers sprung up wherever he or she might set foot. This is literally true of the sun. Wherever he steps, life and beauty follow in his path. The night is dark; and that means that the sun is away. But there is a little flush by and by in the east. The mists begin to move, the rays are refracted and bend over the edge of the globe, the light begins to come, the darkness flees away. Down into the deepest shadows he shines, and everywhere it is beauty and day; and the song-birds wait to greet him, and man goes forth to his labor until the evening comes again.

So the sun is the source of all the light, all the life, all the beauty of this earth of ours. But it is possible to have too much sunshine. It is sunshine in certain conditions that has created the Desert of Sahara. It is sunshine uninterrupted that makes the desert plains of the West, where the

problem of the people is to find water in some shape by which they may fertilize these deserts. So there may be too much sunshine. And note one other thing which has a human significance for us: the effect which the sun produces in shining uninterruptedly depends a good deal upon the nature of the soil on which it shines. Some soils are made hard and brittle and unable to produce anything; while others are made fertile, and are brimming over with life. So the sunshine sometimes hardens people when there is too much of it; and sometimes it only makes the life beautiful and glorious. If you find people then in the midst of uninterrupted prosperity who are hard, it may not be the fault of the sunshine: it may be the quality of that on which it shines which produces these disagreeable results.

One other thing I wish to note right here. It is the sun that makes all the shadows: it is the sun that makes the night. There would be no night, were it not for the sunshine. Had there been no sun, no day, though there may have been some curious kind of people inhabiting some planet, we cannot imagine what, they would never have known what the word "day" meant any more than they would have known the meaning of the word "night." It is the sun that creates the shadows; and it is the sun thus creating the shadows that reveals to us the marvellous universe which is hidden while the sun is up.

I am not sure whether to take time to read it all; but I wish to give you an extract, at least, from what I think is the most wonderful sonnet ever written by anybody. I think I will read it all. It will only take a moment,— Blanco White's famous sonnet To Night. I think you will see the meaning that I am suggesting as I read: —

Mysterious Night! when our first parent knew
Thee from report divine, and heard thy name,
Did he not tremble for this lovely frame,
This glorious canopy of light and blue?

Yet 'neath a curtain of translucent dew,
Bathed in the rays of the great setting flame,
Hesperus with the host of heaven came,
And, lo! Creation widened in man's view.

Who could have thought such darkness lay concealed
Within thy beams, O Sun? or who could find,
Whilst fly and leaf and insect stood revealed,
That to such countless orbs thou madest us blind?
Why do we thus shun death with anxious strife?
If light can thus deceive, wherefore not life?

You see the sun gives us the night by casting the shadow of the earth on which we live, wrapping it round us; and in the shadow we see all the stars, and know that the universe is infinite. It is Richter, I think, who has suggested that man's first dream of immortality may have come as a suggestion from the stars, the worlds sweeping around us in space.

Not only this, the sun gives us all the tempests. It is the sun that makes the rains. There would be no rain, were it not for the sun; and here again, because it is expressed in such exquisite words, I must give you an extract from Aldrich, who has written some exceedingly dainty things: —

"We knew it would rain; for all the morn
A spirit on slender ropes of mist
Was lowering its golden buckets down
Into the vapory amethyst

"Of marshes and swamps and dismal fens,
Scooping the dew that lay in the flowers,
Dipping the jewels out of the sea
To sprinkle them over the land in showers."

It is the sunshine, then, that makes the rain. You will get a suggestion from that perhaps by and by. We have all seen the sun "drawing water," as we said as children; and this is what Aldrich has so daintily pictured to us. The sun draws the rain, the mists, up into the heavens, covers

them with clouds; and then we have either the gentle rain or the mighty tempest, according to the conditions of the atmosphere which surrounds us.

So it is the sun that not only gives us light, but gives us darkness; not only gives us the fair day, but the rainy day, dripping in shower and moaning with its winds. But these tempests, as you know, have a wonderful power for clearing the air. How many times on hot summer days the air is so sultry that it feels oppressive! It seems as though the atmosphere was charged with miasma, with all unhealthy vapors; and by and by we see the cloud-caps come rolling up over the edge of the horizon, and we are glad to know that the electricity is thrilling in the air, and there is going to be a tempest. It may be we are timid, and wish to be a little way from it; but we know that after the rain, when the sky is washed clean, and the earth is bathed and sweet, and the dewdrops tremble on the edge of the flowers and the grasses,— we know what a sweet and blessed thing it is that there can be a tempest, now and then, to clear the air, and wash sweet the old world.

It is time now for us to enter for a little this inner world of thought and feeling, carrying with us some of the suggestions which we have gathered in the outer one. I am not quite sure that you will all agree with me at the outset here. The inner sunshine is joy, happiness. Can we say of that, as we said of the outer, that it is the creator of all the things that we desire,— the sweet, fine, high things of life?

As I said, I am not quite sure whether you will all agree with me or not; but I think so. I believe that the one great, far-off aim and end of human life is joy, happiness. I was born, as a good many of you were, in the Puritan land, and brought up in the midst of Puritan influences; and I can remember as a boy that I was always hushed if I became too frolicsome. I was told that it was not quite becoming in a young man who had experienced religion, and called himself a Christian. I was taught that happiness was a ques-

tionable thing, that we were to expect very little of it in this vale of tears, that it was not a proper thing to look after it, seek for it. And in a certain sense these old Puritans were right. Yet I used to note what seemed to me a curious contradiction. I was told that, if I would be good and did not have too much happiness in this world, I should have nothing but happiness in the next. I was told that the one end and aim of religion was to save us and take us finally to a place of eternal felicity. And, although Jesus was reported as having been "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief," the New Testament says of him, "who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame."

At any rate, however we may philosophize or moralize about it, we stand face to face with the fact that no man can possibly desire that which he does not desire; and no man yet, since the world began, ever desired unhappiness, ever desired that which was disagreeable to him. I know perfectly well that men have chosen the stake or the gallows rather than to be false to what they conceived to be right; but, being the kind of men they were, they chose the stake. It gave them a deeper and higher satisfaction than they could have found in being untrue to themselves. So that in the deepest analysis it is happiness, it is joy, that men are forced to seek, whether they will or not. They desire that which they desire; and they cannot desire the undesirable. So that happiness is the sun, the glory, the brightness of this inner world of which we have spoken.

I know perfectly well, however, that, just as in the case of the outer world the sun is always followed by its shadow, so in the inner world happiness is inevitably connected with its shadow, pain. This, instead of being the work of an enemy, instead of being the result of any fall, instead of being a creation of the devil, is something that could not but exist in the nature of things, and means love and affectionate care on the part of our Father.

Let us see, for example, how unescapable it is. Trace one of the lowest forms of life, and note the time when the first nerve was coming into existence and was only a little line of sensation beginning to be conscious of something that was agreeable. We should note at the same time that it was equally conscious at every step of its growth of that which was disagreeable. Consciousness of pleasure inevitably keeps step with consciousness, or possible consciousness, of pain; and this is a beneficent thing. Let a physician be called in and examine a man who is ill, and, if there is serious disorder and no pain, he will be alarmed, and will tell you probably that the case is beyond help. If, however, there is keen suffering, he knows that there is vitality; and, where there is vitality, there is hope of recovery. If we were not conscious of pain whenever we break a law of health or life, we should be out of existence in a few weeks or months. If a race of creatures were on the earth not capable of feeling pain, they would not exist for six months. It is this sign set up, "Danger!" that keeps us from transgressing the laws at every turn, and thus keeps us alive. All the necessary pain of the world, then, is a beneficent thing, a part of the care of, the loving-kindness of, our heavenly Father. Pain is inevitable: in a world like this it had to exist.

Let us glance at another consideration. I said in the early part of my discourse that, if we had never known anything of darkness, we should never have known anything about light. So let us note this fundamental principle: that consciousness itself exists only in the presence of contrasts. We should never know there was black in the world if we did not know white. We should never know there was any color at all if the world was all one color: we should be as though we were blind. We should never know there was such a thing as sweet if we did not know there was sour. We should never know there was such a thing as pleasure could we not feel the pang of pain.

So, again, this existence of pain, instead of being something to bring against the wisdom and goodness of God as a charge, is an evidence of his wisdom and a token of his goodness.

In this inner world then, as well as in the outer, we find that the light and the darkness go together, the pleasure and the pain, the smiles and the tears, the heartache and the gladness, all linked into that one mysterious strand that is woven of human experience and which we call life.

There is another reason why we ought to be glad of pain, another reason for our regarding it as an inevitable condition of joy. Not only do we want to be happy, but, if we are not altogether selfish, we want other people to be happy also; and, before we are likely to put ourselves out to help on the happiness of the world, we must have learned a lesson of its unhappiness. And how can we learn that except by experience? No man ever learned these things by observation. Pardon me if I draw an illustration from my own experience. I thought I knew what it meant to have death come into a home before it came into mine. I know now that, as tender and sympathetic as I have always tried to be, there must have been a tone lacking in the voice of my sympathy, because I know I did not fully understand.

I have a friend, a lovely man, who is a minister; but his life has been one uninterrupted career of prosperity, so far as any pain or suffering is concerned. And one of his parishioners, a lady, told me one day, in speaking of this very thing, that, should any member of her family die, this man, her minister, would be the very last person on earth she should ever think of going to; for he would have no comprehension of the trouble. We cannot comprehend until we have been touched ourselves. Prosperity, happiness, is intensely egotistical and selfish.

Right in here is the cause of two-thirds, perhaps three-fourths, of the struggles and difficulties of the world,—the struggle, for example, between the poor and the rich, be-

tween the employer and the employed, in all these cases where there is a big gulf of misunderstanding. How can a man who all his life has had everything he wants comprehend what a touch of hunger means? I have a friend in Boston who told me that she could not remember the time from when she was a little child that she could not have anything she wanted by asking for it. How could she understand the struggle of poverty? Prosperity is intensely selfish.

I sometimes wonder, as I look around among my acquaintances, that people do not wake up to little simple things. Pardon my referring to them as illustrations. Perhaps they will make some people a little more thoughtful; for it is true, as Hood writes, that

> "Evil is wrought by want of thought
> As well as by want of heart."

I have known time and time again wealthy people with horses and carriages moan because they had to go out with the horses, in order to give them exercise; and it never seemed to occur to them that round the corner, in any one of a hundred directions, was some poor invalid, perhaps, or frail body, who had not had a drive for six months, and to whom a half-hour in the air would be heaven. They had either to send the horses out with the driver or else go themselves, though much preferring to stay at home. Of course, it is thoughtless; but prosperity is selfish. Too much sunshine hardens and hurts,— some things at any rate. I have known persons who had gardens, greenhouses, fruit-trees; and the fruit would ripen and drop from the trees, and the flowers wither, and the grapes decay, when there were hundreds and thousands of people who would have been grateful beyond words for a little taste of these wasted luxuries. But prosperity is selfish. Too much sunshine is bad for people; and I tell you, friends, that God does lovingly when he puts to lips like these a cup that tastes bitter,

because this is the only way by which people can learn some things, and so be ready to help on the happiness of the world.

Take that word "sympathy" apart, and see what it means, and learn the lesson that is in there. It means to *feel with*, whether the feeling be a pleasant one or an unpleasant; and it is only the people with the power of sympathy that have been the world's great helpers. And it is intensely difficult for us to feel sympathy with people who are not in our society, not of our kind, not of our color, not of our race, not of our religion; and yet they are human, they are the children of the one Father just the same. I have heard people say, when there was a famine half-way round the world: "It don't amount to anything. Perhaps a thousand or two people less would leave the country in a better condition than it was before." Let them agonize for a mouthful of bread, and then hear what they would say. But prosperity is selfish. We are accustomed to smile at the saying of the French princess, who, when she was told that the people in Paris were starving for bread, wondered why they did not eat cake. That is one kind of prosperity looking over the sorrow of the world.

If the world is to come to its happiness, and all the children of the Father are to be happy together, we must learn the touch of sympathy with the world's sorrow, so that we are ready to help and to heal. I believe that this world of ours, while it has too much cloud, too much tempest, too much of the rain of tears, still cannot afford to get along wholly without these. It is for us who are able to do a little something beyond looking after ourselves, to see to it that the lives of others are not too much clouded, that they are not too much disheartened, that they are not utterly discouraged.

For rational happiness means goodness. It is not the happy people of the world who are the criminals. Goethe's mother says,—I am not sure I can quote it correctly,—

"The man who laughs commits no deadly sin." The people who commit the crimes of the world are the discouraged ones, the disheartened, those who have become outcast, those who have had the gates of ordinary prosperity shut in their faces, who have no great love, no strength left to meet and master the world and make it serve and honor them. They are the weak, and therefore the outcast.

Happiness, then, ordinarily means goodness; and it is the happy man who does the finest and best work in the world in the long run. It you wish any man to do the best he possibly can, set him some task he loves, so that he will linger over it and put to it his very finest and most delicate touches. Happiness, then, is good; and unhappiness, too much of it, is evil, and always is to be avoided, to be fought against, to be lessened in quantity and quality, so that we look forward sometimes to a day when the low, sad music of humanity shall have died down, passed away, and become only an echo, only a memory. We look forward, and we strive, towards a day when men shall have made conquest of this old world of ours, and turned all its forces to their service, their uplifting, their helpfulness, and their happiness.

And yet, here again, I do not know whether you will agree with me. I do not expect any day, when all pain shall have been forgotten, not even in the other life,— no, not even there. The old conception of all the unhappiness shut up in one place of darkness, and all the perfect felicity enclosed by the walls of another city, seems to me not only impious, but unreasonable as well. How could Jesus be happy in heaven, he who they tell us left the glory he had with the Father before the world was, to come down here out of pity for men,— how could he be happy with the wail and smoke of the torment ascending up forever and ever? And how could you and I be happy in a heaven like that, and with a place outside like that? If you and I should ever get into a heaven like that, I should hate myself for

being happy, and feel unspeakable contempt for you for being happy. There could be no comfort in that kind of heaven for decent people.

I do not look forward to a time in any future that I can conceive when there will be no rainbow created by sunshine flashing through tears. I do not expect to see any heaven where there will be no need, nobody to whom to minister, nobody needing my help, nobody to teach, nobody to care for. I do not anticipate a heaven where there will be no effort and no sense of victory in overcoming. It would be no heaven to me. I know we get dreadfully weary; and I hear people talk about resting in heaven. But suppose you had rested for a thousand years. By that time, I should think, you would want to do something. And doing something means that there is something to do; and to do something implies effort, implies overcoming, achieving. And, since there is being poured through the dark gates into the mystery of the beyond thousands and thousands of souls every day in every stage of development, I take it there will be an opportunity to teach and help over there, something to do as well as here, something to give meaning to life, something to rouse one's energies and call for the exercise of one's faculties; and I take it that our pleasures, our joys, would have a little keener edge if we could have in the cup that we drink a little bitter, giving a contrast and meaning to taste.

I want no uninterrupted peace: it would be a cessation of consciousness after a time. I want no uninterrupted sweet: it would abolish taste after a while. I want no uninterrupted and universal light: it would abolish vision after a while. I want life,— and there can be nothing grander than life,— so I can feel that all the while life and good are supreme and victorious, and accomplishing their end and achieving that towards which they are striving.

So let there be clouds. I know every time I see a cloud that the sun has created it, and that the sunshine is all

around it; and, if it covers my whole sky, I know still that there is light beyond it in every direction, and that there would be no cloud if there were not light all around it. Let me at sea get into a bank of fog, I know the sun created that fog, and I think the straightest way of getting out of it is to go straight through; for I know there is light over on the other side of it as well as on the side on which I entered.

So let me face the fogs and clouds and darkness of life in this life or any other. I still know that light, sunshine, joy,— these are the centre and heart of things; that they are before all darkness and pain, that they are around all darkness and pain, that they fold all darkness and pain as it were in their arms, that they will use all darkness and pain for some higher end, and that light, life, love, are first and last and eternally supreme.

Father, we thank Thee for this great conviction that is in our hearts as the centre of trust and the mainspring of hope. We give ourselves to Thee this morning. Let us not be selfish, let us not forget our work in our joy; but let us know that the world needs us, and that our truest and highest happiness is in joining with Thee in the work of creating more happiness and peace in the hearts of others. Amen.

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"THE CLEFT IN THE ROCK."

Moses said, I beseech thee, shew me thy glory.

And the Lord said, Thou canst not see my face, but I will put thee in a cleft of the rock, and cover thee with mine hand; and thou shalt see me afterwards, but my face shall not be seen.— Ex. xxxiii. 18, 22, 23.

WHEN the law-giver said this prayer, he was passing through a great and sore crisis in his life.

He had been alone forty days, as we read, in the fastnesses of Horeb, brooding over the things which took shape, finally, in the Ten Commandments, of which the germs were brought, no doubt, from Egypt. But, as he communed with God in the solitude, a divine inspiration touched him, as he believed and as I believe, to cast them into this form, and set on them the seal of the divine sanction they still hold in their essence for us all. And that such a stroke of work should have cost him very dear and lifted him very high was to be expected. So we are told that, when he came down from the mount, his face shone with a light which is not of the sun; but he came down only to find that the tribes he had wrought for so faithfully and loved so well had fallen back into a gross idolatry from which he had done all that lay in his power to save them.

It was a fearful blow to him, no doubt; and we must not wonder that his spirit, strung to its utmost tension and worn with the long fasting, broke out into a mighty rage, in which he burnt up the golden calf, ground the cinders to powder, defiled the wells with it, and made the leaders in this revolt from the Most High drink the water, and served them right, broke the tables of the law also, and did all sorts of wild and ruthless work to mark his estimate of their sin and shame.

But, when this was done, a reaction set in; and he went into the mountains again quite cast down, and doubting, as it seems, whether it was of the least use trying to do any more for them. And this is the time touched in my text.

Everything lay in a mist to him,— what he had done and would still do for them; while the old assurances and visions were like music which had lost its melody and had turned to discords. It was very much like our own experience on some sad November day, when the heaven which bends over the spirit is as bleak as that which bends over the world; and our hopes and endeavors seem like the rotting leaves the rains are beating into the mire under our feet.

And so it was that he wanted what we all want when we are in this sore stress, and life grows dark in the shadows touched with despair. He wanted a very present sense and sight of God which would burn these mists away once for all, and set his soul singing of her confidence as a lark sings on a fair June morning. Then he could go back to his life and his work again in the full assurance of faith. So he cries, "I beseech thee, shew me thy glory."

And I get no good as I watch the man standing there with that great trouble on him from the thought so many insist on in our time, that Jehovah is sitting apart in his own infinite lordliness, as heedless of the man as the great Sphinx was of those who would bend and pray in her presence by the Nile in the old time. I love to believe the heart of the Most High yearned over this poor, bewildered man, and the Father said in his heaven: "My child, I would love to do this for you if it was the best; but I must put you, for your own sake and for mine, in a cleft of the rock, cover you with mine hand, and narrow down all your seeing. But then you shall know it is my hand which has put you there; and, when it is dark all about and above you, I am still near, and nearest when it is darkest, and you shall see me afterward."

Such seems to me to be the true interpretation of this

passage between the child and the Father in the dim old days. There is nothing literal in it, or objective, as we say, save the man standing there and crying out to God in his trouble, "I beseech thee, shew me thy glory."

They pretend to show you still the very cleft in which he was hidden, but the only reality about it all is what you would find if you went to look for Bunyan's Valley and Shadow of Death in the dungeon by Bedford Bridge.

It is a vision of one of the grandest and most pregnant truths we can ever touch, of our relation to God in this life of ours, and of his great and true providence that we see him afterward, but never there and then in the things which are of the highest moment to our life.

We may feel that we could go right on with a high heart and strong if he would but reveal his presence to us, beyond all doubt or fear, while we must break down and have done with it all if we cannot see his face. Yet all he will do for us is to put us in the cleft of the rock, and cover us with his hand; but, then, the day comes for us when we can see how the clear vision might have slain faith; but the darkness has nurtured faith, and made it grow strong and true as the darkness in which they have been hidden nurtured the roots and seeds, and made them bloom forth into the glory of this spring.

In the world's life and our own, I said; for we must notice, first of all, how this is the truth which comes home to us in the creation of the world itself, and the whole work of the Creator as it is set forth in the things that are made turns on this pivot.

For, when we feel our way through the vast ranges of time which reach inward toward the most primitive eras of the world's life, we can see at every step we take how poor and dark our sense of a Divine Presence must have been if we could have seen what was done while the Creator was bending over his retorts and furnaces, storing up the rocks and minerals, and brooding over the savannas and seas,

calling forth the swarms of living creatures that were all to take their bit of life and life's worth from his hand and then to pass away.

"What does it all mean," we should have said, "this life which is forever drifting down to death? Why do these forests stand in the sun to be torn up by tornadoes and buried by earthquakes? Why do these fires burn and these seas swirl? and why are these swarms of living creatures sent shuddering back to the dust? What does it all mean? Who can watch these processes of the creation, and believe God is also watching them and holding them all in the hollow of his hand?"

But now the time has come, the great and wonderful afterward, when we can see God in the creation of the world. The man comes to make this planet his home; and then, slowly, but surely, the truth grows clear to us,— how those forests stood in the sun in a time out of mind, that they might store up his fires, and the tornadoes and earthquakes hid them away, while a thousand precious things came out of the retorts and furnaces for treasure in the time to come.

Nothing lay then outside the boundaries of this kingdom.

> "Not a worm was cloven in vain,
> And not a moth with vain desire
> Was shrivelled in a fruitless fire,
> Or but subserved another's gain."

We can see now what hand shaped and moulded these foundations of the world.

The pebble at your foot tells the story, and the coal in your fires, the treasure in your mines, the marble gleaming in your mansions, and the very whitewash on your cottage walls. They all tell the story.

He has taken His hand away from the cleft in the rock, and we see him afterward in the creation of the world.

Or shall we notice how this truth touches us again in the creation of man.

The elders who hear me can well remember the storms which were brewed and blown from our pulpits when geology came into court, and began to question, with bated breath, the time-honored interpretations of the first chapters in our Bible, touching the creation of the world in six proper days some six thousand years ago. It was rank infidelity and the spawn of the pit, they cried; and, when one eminent divine was asked to explain the fossils which lay before his eyes, this was no trouble, for he said, "No doubt the Creator had put them there to try the faith of his saints." And this might be true, but not as He laid down the law.

Well, that storm has blown itself out. We have quietly accepted the testimony of science touching the creation of the world, and are rapidly forgetting how we ever questioned the testimony, as we have quite forgotten, save as the books remember, that there was a time also when the doctrine of Galileo was the grossest infidelity to the pulpits of his age.

But now in my later life such a storm has been brewing and blowing again from the same quarters over the advent of man.

Gleams of light, growing from dim dawn toward the clearer daylight, have come to us from the caves and drifts, through which we begin to be aware how the man also has come out of the cleft in the rock, where the darkness was all about and above him, and how these truths we are brooding over about the evolution toward a higher and grander life are one with the divine order which built up the world from the fogs, the fires, and the ice-packs of the primitive eras to the glory of this spring, from the old red granite to the June roses, and from the monsters of the prime to the orioles and thrushes brooding and singing over their nests.

So let us say that it doth not yet appear what man hath been any more than what he shall be. All the same these are glimpses of the truth we are gathering about the advent of man; and they are very much like what the master in

music has caught in his matchless oratorio of "The Creation,"—a clash and clang of discords first, reaching up slowly but surely toward the most enthralling melodies.

So we must not fear what science may have to tell us about ourselves, or fear the old cry of infidelity from the old quarter, which is growing fainter every year, as the light on these questions grows more clear.

For, if these seers have caught the truth about the advent of man on the earth, it will not only be a revelation we must gladly accept of the past, but a grand and noble prophecy of the future. Because, if this human creature was by no means set in the beginning on the summit of the world's great altar stairs that slope through nature up to God, but began at the very base to climb, and has won his way painfully, step by step, from where he was then to where he is to-day, then, I think, we are bound to believe he is still climbing upward, and will keep on climbing until he reaches the thrones of life. We must feel no fear about this man whose whole record, so far, is strewn all over with the golden word, "success."

And why should we not be glad to bring the new truth to bear down on the old dogma as it stands?

It is far more welcome and good to me to believe that I sprang from a monad — whatever that may be, for I do not know,— a monad which held its own down there in the slough, and then struck for something better, and still kept on striking for the better and the best — than it is to believe in the Adam we hear of, who was set on the very summits of the creation at the start, and then not only came down headlong himself, but brought untold myriads down with him to darkness, death, and long despair. Between a man like that and your monad, give me the monad. I will be glad for him and proud of him, as I am proud to be the grandson of a sailor before the mast who fought under Nelson, and the son of a smith who died with a hammer in his hand one blazing July day, the men with women to

match them, whose noble striving was my sole fortune, rather than to be the grandson, shall I say, of the Marquis of Steyne.

So it is not retrospect alone, but prophecy, we touch through these glimpses of the man in the cleft of the rock, and the man only a few steps up the ladder which reaches from earth to heaven; but he is climbing slowly and surely, age by age, for this is his doom and glory. And so the apostle says, "The whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now; and we ourselves do groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption which is the redemption of our body, because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God." Solomon moans, man hath no pre-eminence over the beast; but I say he hath this pre-eminence: he has fought his way out of the slough, and the Lord God gave him a living soul.

This is the truth, again, touching the nations. There is a time or many times, indeed, when they are in the cleft of the rock.

Napoleon tears Germany limb from limb as this century opens, crushes Berlin under his heel, and covers Prussia with a pall. The genius of the mighty German manhood is in the cleft, and God will not permit her to see his face; but out of that cleft the new manhood comes, conquering and to conquer. Bismarck was born in the cleft, the greatest statesman since Cromwell, the greatest German since Luther, and Von Moltke, and William, the man we remember.

The German manhood grew great in the darkness when God put her there, because the old Germany had sunk so low that she was worshipping, not one golden calf, but a score of them, only she called them electors and the like; and then the new spirit that was to grind these to powder came out of the cleft, and the work was done.

I mind how I got curious many years ago about a won-

derful melody, "The Watch on the Rhine," and wanted to know what it all meant. So I said to our organist one week-day, a German, "Louis, play me that 'Watch on the Rhine,' and pull out all your stops and shake the church."

The young man's face flushed and his hand trembled as he began to touch the instrument where we were alone in the great building. He seemed to be dreaming for a few moments, and then slowly the mighty melody began to fill the place; and as it smote on my heart, bar after bar, it seemed as if Miriam was singing of the deliverance of Israel from the thrall. It was the music of the new manhood led out of the cleft and established.

There was no face of God for Germany when those dark days were on her, but she saw him afterward, so said the good King William.

And, as it was with Germany, so it was with France. Liberty was turned to Libertinism under the usurper. She fell down also and worshipped the golden calf; and what a calf it was, to be sure!

It was time for her true manhood to go into the cleft. There could be no hope for France wallowing in that marsh of the empire; but now we are able to see dimly that the Eternal Providence had never stood so near her since she crossed the Red Sea of the first revolution as in those dark days when her beautiful capital was invested all about. While this is my faith that she is coming forth now, to reveal a better manhood than she has ever shown since she was a nation; and we may well be glad for this, because France also holds a treasure in her heart and brain of a priceless worth to the world, a genius unique among the nations.

So it was again with our own nation, when we went after a cotton calf, and had to swallow the bitter burnt ashes of our idol, also.

We were in the cleft, then, with our good Father Abraham; and the darkness was above and before us, while for many weary months he must wonder in his patient heart

when the darkness would pass away. The end came with the real beginning, when he made his great proclamation, and the flag stood for freedom as well as for one whole nation. Then the waters of our Jordan parted this way and that, and we came to our rest. Not more surely did the Lord put the man Moses there than he put the man Lincoln there; and not more surely was he with his servant in the old time when he said, "Get thee up into Pisgah," and showed him the promised land he must not enter standing in the sun, than he was with our own leader when he had come to the end of all his labor under the sun, and was swept away to his rest and reward, what time the weapon of the assassin was transformed into the chariot of fire.

And so I came, through such glimpses and glances as these, to ask how we may bring the truth of the cleft home to our own heart and life, and see what lessons we can learn which will help us to be patient with the cleft and the overshadowing hand, while we may never be glad for it.

And still, as we explore these sacred books, we can see how it came to be the proudest boast of Israel, "We have Abraham to our Father"; but such light as shines on Abraham now reveals a man in the cleft a good deal of the time, who gets little glimpses of God through the crannies of a dream, and in watching the signs of the sacrifice, who listens for the inward voice, but is not always sure of that, and, with the whole promise which had brought him from beyond the river to possess the land and to people it, dwindled down at last to a son far on in years, who had not manhood enough in him, as the poor old father saw with dismay, to leave the tents and the mother's apron-string, and find the maid himself who was to be his wife.

This is the divinest human life, again, the world has ever held, which shines in the face and beats in the heart of Jesus Christ. But, if that life had shone on those who were close to it as it shines on us now, think you Peter would have cursed and told that lie when the damsel said this

man also was with him, or Judas have betrayed him with a kiss, or Pilate have condemned him for all their clamor. No, *no*, and forever no. They would have knelt to do him homage as he walked about the streets of Zion; and the high priest would have prayed him to enter the most holy place, and give it a new consecration, that the light on golden candlesticks might burn with a clearer lustre, and the glory on the wings of the cherubim be like that of the angels about the throne. And this light which shines now from his Gospels,— is it not as broad as humanity and as high as heaven? Yet he also was in the cleft of the rock, as he hung there on the cross and moaned, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" and yet never imagined for an instant that he could forsake us or forsake God.

So I might go on to show you how this is the truth touching multitudes of the most royal souls God ever sent down to help and bless us, heathen as we call them, and Christian alike, who are now numbered among the saints and heroes of the race. Yet this is the truth, that there was not a man or woman of them all who had not to stand in the cleft of the rock while still they longed to see God's face, to catch the grand, luminous, infinite truth, that they might go right on in the track of the clear shining, singing mighty psalms. But what they wanted through the light came to them in the darkness, when all they had to hearten them was as much faith as they could muster in the cleft. Yet this, to them, was as when a gleam from the sun touches a seed in some crevice in the massive walls of the old temples in Central America, when the seed grows and bourgeons and becomes so mighty that the walls split and shudder down at last, and the idols follow the idolatries into the dust.

So these dark days may come to us when we are in the cleft, I say, and can find no way and see no light. The great walls of hindrance may stand on the right hand and the left, and the darkness may be before and above us; and

yet these may be the very choicest of all the days, the days when

> "We make a nobler faith our own;
> And He is with us in the night
> Who makes the darkness and the light,
> And dwells not in the light alone."

Is it in the work we have to do? I have talked with many a man who has made what we call a grand success in life; yet I have still to find the first man who could tell me he had never been in the cleft with the darkness above and before him, or who — being the man I think of — did not let me see how he had found a strength in the cleft he never could have found in the fair, broad sunlight of prosperity and ease.

And so, if I have said sooth, what better fortune can I pray for to befall you than that you also should be set in the cleft of the rock and be brave and patient there, and learn the great good lesson of the cleft in the calling whereunto you are called?

And in the deeper life and diviner the time must come of the cleft and the hand, the time of doubt and fear, and darkness above and before us, when we would fain see God's face, and say to our souls, "One supreme vision would send us singing through the wilderness; but it is all so dim that we would have so clear." Dim, *dim*. Well, so it was with the planet and the race, the nations and the saints and seers. Always it is *afterward* the presence grows clear to them rather than there and then; and what they were, so we may be. Let us be brave, then, about the cleft, and nourish through all doubt and dismay a simple, trustful heart and faith in the overshadowing hand. It is the truth I would touch finally of, the faith we hold as Unitarians. I think we are still in the cleft of the rock, and must abide there until our faith in the One God, our Father, has grown so strong that it will master the world. The forces of orthodoxy under all its names say we are in a fog,

that we do not know what we believe, we have no creed and no sure standards, we have no God human eyes have ever seen, human hands have touched, or human ears have heard, while they have the Christ, the second person in the Trinity. We answer: "No man hath seen God. He is the eternal, immortal, and invisible, whom no man hath seen or can see." We must be true to the truth we hold, and true to our own souls. Then our children will see what we cannot see, how these years of struggle and disheartenment for so many through a century of time were the years when faith grew strong, when hope was waiting to plume her wings, when our Christ shall give up the kingdom unto God the Father, and he shall be all in all.

Bear with me for a few moments more while I say that I have been musing over this thought of the cleft in the rock as the memories have stirred my heart, touching the fifty years of time since I came to this New World with the dear house-mother who is now with God. And I can see, as I look through the long vista, what worth has come to my life and the life of my beloved through the cleft in the rock.

Fifty years ago to-day we spent our first Sunday on this island, with no human soul in the strange New World to clasp our hands and give us a welcome. Shall I mention a little incident that touches me now very tenderly? We were within the shadows. I must find some work to do, I wondered where; and my heart was heavy within me. When my own dear mother was in trouble, she would sometimes turn to her Bible; and the words on which her eyes fell she would take for direction. I opened my Bible. It opened easily there, and my eyes fell on these words: "Why art thou cast down, O my soul, and why art thou so disquieted within me? Hope thou in God, for thou shalt yet praise him. He shall be the help of thy countenance and thy God." I was lifted out of the cleft. I found the work to do. Was it a superstition? I say no. It was an inspiration, and we went forth

gladly to face the world. The time came when the old faith was no longer clear,— shall I say the old dogmas? I must find a sure footing. I found one in the faith we hold in common, and which has grown clearer and sweeter through all the years that have come and gone. I was called to be the minister of my dear old church in Chicago. A grand church was built in the course of time. It was burnt in the great and awful fire.

I was deep in the cleft of the rock. The shadows were very heavy. I think they were touched with despair, but the strong heart of the dear helpmeet beat with faith and hope. She bade me take courage. Sorrow endured for the night: hope came in the morning. The church was rebuilt by the boundless generosity of our friends in England and America. The day came for the dedication, and then my heart was moved to sing this psalm with my people when we gathered for the sweet and tender solemnity: —

"O Lord our God, when storm and flame
Hurled homes and temples into dust,
We gathered here to bless thy name,
And on our ruin wrote our trust.

Thy tender pity met our pain.
Swift through the world thine angels ran;
And then thy Christ appeared again
Incarnate in the heart of man.

Thy lightning lent its haughty wing
To bear the tear-blent sympathy,
And fiery chariots rushed to bring
The offerings of humanity.

Thy tender pity met our pain,
Thy love has raised us from the dust.
We meet to bless thee, Lord, again,
And in our temple sing our trust."

And so I think I have learned the lesson I would teach of the cleft in the rock, in these fifty years.

Life Beyond Death

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PUBLISHER'S NOTE.

The readers of *Messiah Pulpit* are aware of the fact that Dr. Savage has not been in his usual health for the past year or more. His pulpit work, while never better done, has been at the expense of great personal effort and fatigue; and it now seems best for him to discontinue it until after the vacation season. His plans for the summer include a short trip abroad and thorough rest, his physician and friends believing that he will be able to take up his work in the autumn with renewed vigor.

The publication of *Messiah Pulpit* will continue until the usual time for closing the church, including so far as possible the sermons of those who supply the pulpit, with possibly an occasional reprint of one of Dr. Savage's older sermons, for some of which there have been loud calls since they were out of print.

As Rev. Mr. Hargrove, who occupied the pulpit at the Church of the Messiah last Sunday, does not desire to have his sermon published, we reprint this week one of Dr. Savage's, first printed as No. 2 in the Ninth Series of *Unity Pulpit*, for 1887–88.

HINDERED LIVES.

And, being let go, they went to their own company.— ACTS iv. 23.

THIS is mere commonplace. Of course they did. Where else would they be likely to go? What is there about it so remarkable that any one should think of taking it for a text? It is the very simplest kind of narrative in which the words are found. Peter and John had been preaching their new religion, and had been living out its principles of help towards others. But a better religion always seems an insult to that which the people have long been accustomed to look on as sacred and perfect. So it follows that religion is the last thing in the world that religionists are willing to have improved, The proposers of improvements have, therefore, always got themselves into trouble. It is only natural, then, that Peter and John had been arrested. After keeping them imprisoned over night, the authorities did not find sufficient reason for detaining them any longer. So, after repeated threatenings, they were obliged to let them go. "And, being let go, they went to their own company." That is all,— the most natural thing in the world.

But under the surface of the commonplace is always lurking that which is not commonplace. In speaking of the common observer, Wordsworth tells us that

> "A primrose by a river's brim
> A yellow primrose was to him,
> And it was nothing more."

But to Wordsworth himself it was a good deal more. It had for him suggestions of infinite meanings. The commonplace earth is, now and again, rising into the sublimity of

mountains; the commonplace ocean is being lifted into the majesty of storms; the commonplace air hangs over us the dome of immensity that, when the night comes, lures us through star-lighted pathways into infinity.

So underneath the commonplace actions of our daily lives are all the poems, oratorios, romances, comedies, tragedies, epics, that the world has ever dreamed. In this simple statement, then, that, "being let go, they went to their own company," if we do not find that which touches the highest and the deepest things in our lives, it will be because I do not possess the power to anoint your eyes with that which shall enable you to discern the open secrets of the world.

The natural world is all one illustration of my theme. By getting it clearly in mind here, we shall be able more fully to feel its force in the range of human aspiration and endeavor. Nothing stands alone. All things have affinity for or feel the attraction of something else. And all things, when "let go" by the forces that hold them back, inevitably seek "their own,"— the associations that are congenial. And all the world is full of stunted or aborted growths, because they have not been "let go," and so permitted to seek "their own company."

Many of you have taken a walk in the fields this past summer, and, in so doing, have displaced a stone with your foot in passing. Perhaps the most of you have walked on without thinking, and so have seen nothing. But, if some one more thoughtful than common has stopped and looked, he has noticed two or three simple things. First, that the stone itself, when freed from the impulse of the passing foot, has, under the power of gravity, sought the first congenial resting-place. Next, he has seen certain darkness-loving creatures hurry away to escape the disagreeable light and find "their own company" in the shadow again. And, once more, he has observed aborted and stunted growths of grass and what might have been a flower, if it had only had a chance. Pale and starved, they have struggled against the

obstacle that held them down; but their hunger for sunshine has not been fed.

One of the most inexplicable of all natural wonders — though we get familiar with it and cease to try to explain — is the carrier-pigeon. Borne hundreds of miles away, kept in confinement until the hour has come, at last he is "let go" with his message. Rising high in air, who knows how he takes his bearing? But, in some strange way, "his own" has kept its hold upon him; and "high he shoots through air and light," until his fluttering heart is once more at rest in his own congenial surroundings. Be it a lover's message or news of war and peace, he knows not, neither does he care. It is under the impulse of his own instinct that, "being let go," he seeks his "own company."

And what is the song of a dancing brook, as it leaps adown the mountain side? Such kinship is there between the spirit and life in nature and our own spirits that we continually find ourselves endowing the activities of the external world with our own passions and dreams. So I often find myself hearing the mountain brook singing the song of the wanderer, glad with the dream of his home. Forced away from it for a time, the drops of water are seized afar from their ocean home, and made restless wanderers of the air. As mist, they creep ghost-like over the landscape or bind their fantastic wreaths about the hillsides. As cloud, they are driven hither and thither at the will of the wild winds. The sun gathers them about him like curtains to hide his noon-day brightness or to decorate his western palace at his setting. They are swept far inland to where the sea is only a far-off tradition and a mystery. Then the cold freezes their hearts, and they are buried, wrapped in the winding-sheets of some wild mountain snow-storm. Held captive thus for months, the sun, who first tore them from their home, comes back and sets them free. The summer breathes upon their ice-chains, and the home longing sweeps over them. They drop down the outside of their prison walls,

and, joining the troops of their companions, rush and sing along the pathway that is leading them again to "their own company" in their old-time ocean home.

So the song of the raindrop chants the eternal truth of nature and the human heart: that, when "let go," all things haste to "their own company."

In all the range of the natural world, however, there is nothing that has quite so many voices for my ear as has the sea. How many a time have I sat on the rocks and watched the incoming tide! Swept on by the infinite impulse behind them,— shall we say? — or drawn on by their invisible queen in the far-off heavens, the waves always speak to me of eager and tireless endeavor. How they raise their white hands, as if in pleading for some great thing as yet unattained! How they reach on and up, as if in endless aspiration! Then, as though baffled and falling back in temporary failure, they break in the unutterable pathos of infinite tears; while, prostrate on the sands, they seem but an echo of the moan of baffled human endeavor. I sometimes pick out for notice some one wave just gathering itself far off from shore. It rises, and comes grandly on. It will strike the rocks, I think, with more than common effect of power and beauty. But the impulse was not quite strong enough; or some untraced influence swept it one side; or the unseen undertow was too mighty; or,— who can tell why? — from some reason I could not see, it suddenly lost its promise of significance, and sank in the mass of commonplace waters. And I have mused and listened till I felt that I was sitting and watching the seething, striving, failing, but always endeavoring sea of human passions, hearts, souls, hopes, fears. And I cry out: O sea of human life, whose drops are souls, never yet was any striving all in vain! It is the impulse of the Infinite One that bears you on!

Then I have turned a little way up the rocks, and seen a pool left by some tide that was higher than the ordinary; and here, flung out of their true element and left powerless

to return, were tiny sea creatures imprisoned. How quickly, if "let go," they would seek "their own company"! But as they swam their narrow round, or as, the pool evaporating, they gasp for the life that was sinking away from them, what pathetic stories they have told me of stranded human lives, lives out of their element, lives cramped and starved by conditions, lives dreaming of the unattained that, like the sea to these, shimmered and whispered far away!

It is time for me to turn now from these suggestions of the human facts to the facts themselves.

And, right here, I wish to indicate to you the three main suggestions of our theme: —

1. So many lives are bound.
2. Their great need is to be "let go."
3. "Being let go," they will always "seek their own."

And now I must deal with a few of the forms that this human bondage takes.

The most obvious of all, perhaps, is what may well be called the bondage of external conditions.

Here is a lonely boy in some far-off, country town. Though in the midst of his fellows, he is not like them. There is in him the germ of possible greatness. He goes apart by himself, and dreams dreams of a life that transcends the possibilities of his narrow village. He looks out over the hills; and the longing of the great world sweeps over him. He nurses a hope of he hardly knows what, but of something that beats in his heart and inspires his brain. But he is in bonds. Poverty is on him, and the necessity of toil in ways that weary the body and cramp the brain. Then it becomes a question,— will his conditions crush him, and will the grand possibilities in him atrophy and die, or will he be "let go," that he may seek his own?

It is sometimes said that every boy who has anything of force will find some way to the expression of all that is in him. But I cannot think so. A thousand seeds that might have unfolded into wondrous growths have fallen into uncon-

genial soil, and have either perished or else reached only a stunted, sickly life. What Gray writes of those sleeping in the churchyard at Stoke-Pogis is true, I think, of many in all lands: —

> "But Knowledge to their eyes her ample page,
> Rich with the spoils of time, did ne'er unroll;
> Chill penury repressed their noble rage,
> And froze the genial current of the soul."
>
> "Some mute inglorious Milton here may rest,"

might, I believe, be written as the epitaph of many a silent singer.

Since determining on this subject for to-day's sermon, I have received a letter that, if written for the very purpose, could not have come with a more forcible emphasis of my thought. It is from a soldier's widow; and so modestly, so simply, is it written that I know she will be more astonished than anybody else to see it made prominent as an illustration of a great life-problem. I did not read it with dry eyes; and I said, Here at least is a life hindered from the attainment of its ideals by conditions hard indeed! Her story, perhaps, is common, but infinite in its pathos.

The youth she was to marry came home from the war a physical wreck. But, after apparent recuperation, they were married. She writes: "He was soon pronounced a confirmed invalid. Days of hope, months of suffering,— such was my life. When he died, my legacy was three children, a mortgaged house, debt, and desolation. For ten years I have battled; and now I ask you, Does God really help those who try to help themselves, or are we victims of circumstance?" Her one boy is dead; and, with two daughters, she is left without a male relative on earth. Her letter is called out by my last Sunday's sermon. She does not beg: she only asks if I can help her to get work. She is trying to educate her girls, to put them beyond the possibility of repeating the sorrows and struggles of her own life.

She no longer hopes for herself, she says, but only for them. Her letter is simply and finely written; and she refers touchingly to her ideals that now she has no longer a hope of making real.

Here, indeed, is a hindered life! Her letter shows plainly what she might have been and towards what high and noble things she would have striven, had she only been "let go" from these bonds of cramped conditions that have held her down. And, for a soul with such possibilities, how touching are her closing words: "Money for the children, money for debts, is my central thought. And work is my object, sleeping or waking!" No, friends: this old world is not yet civilized while the wings of such souls are bound, nor until they are "let go" to seek the high company to which they really belong.

These two cases are like myriads more; and time would fail me to hint one in a thousand of them all. Men and women are on every hand beneath whose toil-worn dress are folded the bound and cramped wings of the might be, that will never expand in the uncongenial air of their present conditions.

Then there are those whose lives are bound and hindered, not by external circumstance, but by inherited mental conditions.

They have never been educated, or their training has been of a kind to warp and twist into unnatural shapes. Splendid engineers have spent their lives in stammering through dull sermons. Or men whose hearts were hot with the preacher's message have wasted their eloquence in the forced routine of an uncongenial business. Men and women who might have been the glad evangels of a hopeful faith have been so trained that they will creep through all their lives the superstitious slaves of a heavenly tyrant that exists only in the feverish fancy of the ignorant.

I know a man of magnificent natural endowment, of whom the world has never heard and never will hear. He has

inherited such a bondage to temperament that the force of his creative power is all lost in dream. He "will do"; but he does not. So educational bias, in the case of many, has become hardened into a bondage to error, and so of incompetence to serve the truth, from which this life will never set them free.

These, as brief suggestions of mental bonds from which thousands need to be "let go."

And now I turn to another kind of bondage,—that to inherited moral weakness, or such as those with which we have bound our own hands.

It is unspeakably pathetic to me to note the souls that are struggling in the nets of their own inherited weaknesses. A man is more than commonly gifted with brain power. His native instincts are fine. He loves his friends and is generous to all that look to him for help. His heart answers to every demand for noble service. With proper training, no voice of beauty or good would have appealed to him in vain. His feet are on the highway of the king that leads to all the glory that comes to the loftiest souls. But a weakness lurks in his nature that, now and again, trips his feet, and makes him the pity of his friends and the disgust of his own better hours. A thirst sweeps over him that becomes his master, and leads him in paths of darkness and shame, from which he comes out into the light only to marvel that that other and lower kind of life is really a part of himself. These are not really his "own company": they are foreign to what he feels himself capable of being. He longs to be "let go," to be free, so that, by the year, he may keep the bright company of such thoughts and pursuits as he can share proudly with his friends.

There are those, also, who have inherited a tendency to terrific outbursts of anger. I know of a Western gentleman of whom a friend said, "I really wonder that he does not some time murder me, when I am compelled to stand in his way." And he added, "I can but think, when I consider

his case, that it is infinitely to his credit that he does so well as he does; for his inheritance of passion is something awful."

Again, there are those under the power of unscrupulous ambition, of bitter pride, of consciousless lust,— souls so limed that they cannot fly, and that they become the easy prey of the fowler.

One more class I must speak of, one that might have been included under the first, had I not wished to mark them off with an emphasis of their own. These are such souls as, whether by marriage or in any other way, are bound to other souls, that drag them down or hold them back from their true destiny.

One of the saddest poems to me in all literature — as it is one of the most beautiful — is "Andrea del Sarto." He not only felt himself, but was looked on by his contemporaries to be, one of the great artists of all time. But he was passionately in love with a woman small of soul and mean of character. She could take no measure of his genius, and cared for his art only as a means to feed her pride and her passions. But he loved her, and poured out at her unworthy feet all the passion of a great soul; and, as he could not lift her to his level, she dragged him down to her own. For her sake, he became dishonest, misappropriated money given him for art, and made his genius only a matter for commerce. He loved her so that, though he knew his bondage, he had no desire to be free. Sometimes a love like this is a bondage, a compulsion to all high and lofty things. But, with him, it was the opposite. And so, though "his own company" was amid the stars, he was never "let go" to seek it; and his work is but a promise that was never fulfilled.

Sometimes the bondage is only one of dependence, like that of the sister and father of Charles Lamb on his tireless though exhausting care.

There is the case of a distinguished preacher of the

Church of England. All his life was wormwood because the wife by his side was vain and jealous, incapable of understanding him, and unwilling that anybody else should. Many a great man of this country as well as of others might be used to illustrate the same point. And, equally well, the illustration might be turned about, and noble women shown, all whose grandest endeavors have been hindered by the incapacity of those by their sides to measure the stature of their souls. The whole life of Jesus himself was saddened and hindered by the inability of those with whom his life was bound up to comprehend what manner of man he was; and his best influence in all the ages has been crippled and perverted by this same inability of comprehension.

When I think of these things, I am standing on the rocks again, and hearing the broken, human cry of waves that echo the moan of lonely, striving souls.

Now, from this great fact of the myriads of hindered lives that, if only "let go," would so gladly seek "their own," I wish to turn to a few suggestions of the fact.

And, in the first place, in the light of this principle that all things, when "let go," seek "their own company," we may find the means of self-revelation, and so see what kind of persons we are. The current of thought, swept on by the force of character, is a ceaseless one. If you wish to learn the real tendencies of your nature, remove the compulsion of purposive will, and let your thoughts take their own channel. They will inevitably flow out towards those things for which you chiefly care. You can thus observe the drift of your own soul.

Of course,— and this is a most hopeful thing,— you can compel your life into new and better channels, until the day shall come when it will easily and naturally follow courses that now are foreign to it. But at any given time the free and unconscious impulses of our lives show what we would be if we were wholly "let go" by all compelling forces, and left to seek our "own company."

Here is a man, for example, who hears voices, sees visions, and dreams dreams; that is, to him nature and man are alive. He sees meanings in the commonplace. Wind-voices and surf-beats are not mere noises, but they have something to say to him; and his soul trembles with echoes of "the low, sad music of humanity." The world plays on him as on an instrument; but he has never been trained to utter what he feels. He has never been educated, or a grinding poverty has bound him to uncongenial tasks. But, though he never wrote a line, such a man is a poet. Of such, when they are gone, it may be said: —

His heart was full of budding thought
That never bloomed in speech,
And rich dreams his fine fancy wrought
His words could never reach.

No book shall bear his name adown
To glad the world to be;
Yet, in some fair land, he is known
A prince of minstrelsy.

For many a tongue, that here was tied,
Finds sweetest utterance there;
And thoughts, that here unspoken died,
Bloom in that sunnier air.

So there are artists whose hands have never caught the trick of the brush or been trained to the skill of the chisel. And better be a fine bud, that your earthly climate never permits to flower, than, in the rich soil and with a plenty of sunshine, to open only to be a weed or to poison the air with noxious exhalations. There are two things worse than having no opportunity to blossom; and these are,— either not to care to be anything, or, having opportunity, to prove one's self unfit for it.

But the world is not so poor in heroic qualities as to have only those heroes whose names are emblazoned on the rolls of its popular admiration. Those who would be heroes, if

they could, are heroes in the sight of God. "You know what I would do if I could!" When one says that to me, I know what such a soul is. The woman who longs to be like him who "went about doing good," but whose daily life is cumbered by a thousand cares, her time frittered away by a thousand distractions, her means inadequate to a half of the things she even tries to do,— such a woman, however her life is hindered, is even now the embodiment, in her noble soul, of all her noble dreams.

The soldier's widow, fighting for bread and to place her daughters in the midst of womanly surroundings, dreaming still of an ideal that in this life can be only a dream,— she may rank infinitely higher, as judged by divine standards, than a thousand of such as flutter aimlessly through a useless social existence, not even haunted by a dream of the unattained.

Looked at in the light of this principle, we may see that the great object of all soul-training is a self-controlled freedom. I cannot but believe that all souls, if "let go" by all hindrances, would choose to seek the best. The best means life and happiness; and these all must desire. When, therefore, they seek other ends, it is and must be because some binding force is still upon them,— passion or ignorance or inherited impulse of some evil kind.

The grandest service, then, that we can render our fellow-creatures is to fill to them the office of soul-liberators. Find out what it is that binds them, that hinders their upward way, that turns aside their feet, and seek to let them go. To this end, all education is, or should be, directed. This is the aim of all religion. Those who have won the worthy gratitude of the past have been such as these. Those who to-day are really helping the world are such as these.

One outlook more remains to be taken in the light of this simple principle. Only within a week have I received a letter raising the old question as to the law of the association of souls in the future life. I know not how many times

it has been put to me. This writer asks, "Do you think men who devote their lives to the elevation of mankind will, in eternity (as they now do), dwell in the same place with criminals and very wicked people?" I did not know that such people dwelt together here. Their bodies, indeed, may occupy positions not far apart in space; but that is not being together. Two persons separated by the world's diameter may be nearer together than two others sharing the same house.

It is indeed true that the conditions of this life sometimes produce unpleasant meetings. But, generally, even here people can find and associate with their own kind. And, in the next life, I am of opinion that it will be still less difficult to avoid disagreeable associations. Nor do I believe it will be necessary to fence people apart or shut a section of them up in some prison-house. Our hells and our heavens are within us. In this world, men seek the company they like. And, when the hindering conditions of the present have let us all go, we shall naturally seek our own "company." If there be a place called heaven, it will need no gates to keep out people who would not there find themselves at home; and, if there be a place called hell, it will need no bolts and bars to hold the people who belong there.

The only thing we need be anxious about is our own condition and training. There, as well as here, "being let go," we shall seek our own kind. But I think we may take to our hearts one hope that has in it infinite consolation. Here it is often true that those who, by right of soul-kinship, belong together, are kept apart so far as free and happy association is concerned. One who has at all deeply studied life and its great undercurrents of meaning has learned that the things which here keep people together are frequently only external bonds,— bonds which are only local and temporary in their nature. "Blood is thicker than water," we say; but souls are stronger than blood. We find that there are mightier bonds than those of blood-relationship or any

human-manufactured ties; and I like to think that, sometime and somewhere, souls will find "their own." Whatever may stand in the way, divine power is stronger than all hindrances; and love, real love, is the divinely-created soul gravitation that will one day sweep into one orbit, to sing and shine together, those who belong together.

Browning sings this great truth most sweetly and touchingly in his poem called "Evelyn Hope." He is by the casket of his dead love, which, however, in this world had not been possessed: —

"Is it too late, then, Evelyn Hope?

. . . . . .

"No, indeed; for God above
Is great to grant, as mighty to make,
And creates the love to reward the love,
I claim you still, for my own love's sake."

And, putting a flower in the hand of the dead one, he whispers,—

"You will wake and remember and understand!"

I know souls half the world apart that belong together; and, when "let go" by the hand of death, what shall hinder them from seeking "their own company"?

And to those, all those, who sorrow for the lost or over year-long separation from those they love, this truth has a world of comfort. Clasp to your hearts the faith that Whittier sings,—

"That Life is ever Lord of Death,
And Love can never lose its own."

So, O poor, bound souls, hungry and thirsty but hindered lives, take courage! Whether the hindrance be one of external condition, of mental narrowness and ignorance, of inherited moral weakness, of bondage to another life that keeps you down,—all these things some day shall end. If

you are discouraged, striving in vain to grasp a high ideal; if, like the sobbing waves, some undercurrent sweeps you back at what seems the very moment of achievement; if you long for a companionship to match the aspirations of your soul,— look up and listen! Hear the voice, as though it were that of God himself, telling what shall be,— the great principle shining out through the simplicity of the commonplace narrative,— "And, being let go, they went to their own company."

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EDWARD A. HORTON

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"THE CITY OF GOD."

The city lieth four square, and the length is as large as the breadth. The length and the breadth and the height of it are equal.— REV. xxi. 16.

IT is the holy city the seer sees in his vision, where the good dwell, and gentle and faithful and true, as he tells us, of every nation and kindred and people and tongue, east, west, north, and south. But we may well wonder whether many of us have got there, or are likely to do so yet awhile, when we notice how we still stand aloof, and not seldom call each other names because those who cannot think as we do have come from some other direction.

It makes no great matter, then, how honest they may be, and sincere and true: they are still of one kind, while we are of another; and it is hard for us to imagine even that their claim can be quite as good as ours to be fellow-citizens of the saints,— meaning those who think as we do. They must come to the Holy City on the same line as this we take, and be able to give about the same true account of the journey, or else they must be counted of a poorer quality, as in the great grain markets we grade our wheat as one, two, and three. So those of us — no matter what the name — who count ourselves number one feel we must not get mixed up with two or three, or the whole worth of what we stand for will come into peril.

We must keep up the standard; and we mean by that the beliefs and opinions which are most nearly like our own, with but a slight regard for the large and fair conclusion that those who are not walking on the way we take to the city have still as deep a stake in getting there as we have.

So, as I said, not to be of our persuasion, or "*domination*," as a good woman called hers once when I asked her where

she went to church, is to occupy a lower place in these great questions of the soul's outlook and insight of the Holy City; and so no denomination that I know of is quite free from this feeling, or, it may be, can be free. I have thought I could detect it among the Baptists, and my dear mother was a Baptist. I know it is to be found among the Unitarians; while your stanch Methodist has it as surely as your High Churchman, and your Quaker as surely as your Roman Catholic. The one true way,— or the truest, shall I say? — is this we take to the City of God; and the one true gate is that by which we enter. But, when we turn from our faith to our life in its wider aspects, we may all notice how we do a little better than this by those who are our fellow-citizens in the republic. They come to us from far and wide, to find their home here; and about all we care for is this, that they shall be good men and good citizens. They may come from the East with its history or the West with its prophecy, from the hard-headed North or the warm-hearted South; but, if they will only take hold and do their share of the work, which is always waiting to be done, in a good manful way, we are quite content. We may be a little bit clannish still, to be sure, and I think we are; but we do not let this feeling bar the wider and more gracious flow of our life toward them. And we may count men back to their race while as yet we know little else about them, because this is one way, and, on the whole, a very good way, to touch the lines at once of their worth and their limitations.

Still, this is swept aside in some fair measure when we are once sure of our man. He may come from any direction; but we count this of no great moment in the exact measure of the deepness and worth of our insight, and think it is a shame to discount his claim by saying, "Ah! but he is an Englishman, or an Irishman, or a German." If he is a good, sterling *man*, one who weighs well in the scales of honesty, of usefulness, and of virtue, we are quite content to count him in; and then I notice that those who are of the

old stock are ready to make ample amends for any touch of hesitation they may have felt in giving such a one the right hand of fellowship while as yet he was an unknown and untried man.

You may notice, once more, that, when we strike still wider lines than these, we are able to see where the worth lies of this greater and fairer judgment, and in a still finer light. This was one of the lessons, I remember, which came to me in our great World's Fair in Chicago, and also when I went to the Great Exposition in Paris in 1878.

There, in each city, were the noblest arts and inventions of the nations, east, west, north, and south, and in their best estate; while they all had the worth in them of the manhood which looks backward or forward, or the warm and fluent nature, or that which works to severe and hard lines. So in the best work of the old Eastern lands you could easily trace the worth of tradition, reflection, and the spirit which goes backward, while in the best work of the Western there was enterprise and anticipation in the spirit which looks forward.

And strong and stern work came from the North; while from the South came the most wonderful exuberance in form and color, and a plastic softness touched here and there with a half-savage energy or a seductive underplay of fancy, which was just the reflex of the manhood which gave us the treasure.

It was to be seen in all the fabrics and pictures that were genuine transcripts of each land and race. So, turn where you would, this was the waiting truth; and, then, it was not hard to see how a completeness of beauty and worth lay within the whole treasure you would have looked for in vain, had any been left out. Take away reflection or anticipation, austerity or emotion, and you could have had no such wonders of worth and beauty in the finer or the homelier arts. East, West, North, and South were all needed for this revelation of the best the nations can do, and the races.

And so the city of God in the arts lieth four square, and the gates open every way; while this is the truth also about the genius which is hidden in noble books and in all the tracks of the spirit they reveal. Measure them by true lines, and you will find you still have to go eastward for the past and westward for the future, northward for cool reason and southward for fervid emotion; that science belongs to our Western lands, the promise of the future, and the old sacred books to the Eastern lands, the treasures of the past, while poetry and music were born of the South, and stern reason of the North.

It is true, to be sure, that these diverse qualities mix and mingle in the greatest books, so that there seems to be a confusion like that we notice in the isothermal lines and the winds which blow where they list, to chill you to the bone in Florida when we are fainting with the heat in New York, or to give you a calm in the very temple of the winds and a storm in the heart of all stillness.

The spirit which hides itself in great works of genius —or, shall I say in the greatest? — cannot be bound, as it may be, in the things I have glanced at; and so your supreme books are hard and stern, or soft and fluent, and dip backward or forward on these grand free lines within themselves.

Still, we have only to imagine a world full of great books, in which there was only one grand quality to the exclusion of the rest. No sacred treasures from the past or splendid hopes for the future, no cool reason or glowing emotion to see how poor we should be in such a case where we are now so rich. They are all needed for the perfect revelation of human genius in this spiritual body we call a book: the past and the future must be in them, and words that kindle and words that cool. So the city of God in the human heart, and intellect, also, lieth four square; and the gates open every way.

Once more, as it is with the book, so it is with the man; for, wherever you find a man of a most noble genius, you

will find an incarnation of these diverse powers and qualities. So the greater prophets find their full expression, not in anticipation alone, but also in reflection, and lay stout bolts of reason in the moulds into which they pour the molten gold of their deep emotion; while Milton must have a Paradise Lost before he can give us a Paradise Regained, and argue of foreknowledge, will, and fate between his lovely interludes of the garden and the first human pair.

This is the secret of your true orator, again, on the platform or at the bar, in the senate or the pulpit; for we are all at fault, as we lack this power to look backward or forward, to bind our work well together with reason and logic, or to penetrate it through and through, when we must, with the fires of a strong emotion. It is the truth about the noblest and best in the living word, I say; and this city, also, lieth four square, and her gates open every way. Prophecies and poems, sermons on Mars' hill or in this city, orations that mark an era or lyceum talks of a man like Tyndall,— scan them all, and you will find them four square in the precise measure of their perfection,— wealthy in anticipation and in reflection, bound fast by reason and logic, and threaded through with quick emotion; for this city also lieth four square, her gates open every way, and the length and the breadth and the height thereof are equal.

Now would it not be of all things strange, once more, to find that this law was of no great moment in the things that touch the soul most nearly, which is of such a noble worth in our whole life besides, or that the main worth in religion should lie in one of these, to the dwarfing and starving of all the rest? Because it is not hard to see how this is no mere notion of mine, but a revelation, rather, of the way God takes with man to bring out all his powers, and to reveal us to ourselves at our best, each quality holding its own secret, revealing its own worth, and filling its own place in this completeness I have tried to touch. So is it not fair and true, then, that we should take this to be the

law of the religious life, and venture on the presumption, if we can do no more just now, that just as we can count each of these powers at their true value, making none of them masters, but insisting on them all as equals in this divine commonwealth, we shall find the conditions of the truest religious faith and the finest religious life,— a faith and life in which the priceless treasures of the past must be as dear to us as the splendid promise of the future, and what holy men of old have said by a divine inspiration, as what holy men say now and will say always, while the processes of reason and logic by which we come to the truth shall by no means override the fine intuition which catches truth on the wing?

May not such a truth, again, stand side by side with a stout and steadfast denial of the claims so often made that some one of these qualities is really supreme, or, if not quite supreme, still of a worth which overshadows all the rest,— a claim you will find at the roots of very much of the pride and bigotry which still troubles the Church of the living God?

For myself, I think it is a limitation no church or sect or man need be proud of, any more than we are proud of short-sightedness or color-blindness in ourselves. So, when I say that the Church which cleaves only to the past, to the Bible, and her own traditions and usages, is the only true Church, and I want no more and will seek no further, it seems to me the true reply to such a claim must be, This is very good, as far as it goes; but it only goes eastward, after all.

Or I may say, I will believe in nothing I cannot reason out and understand to the last word and comma, and settle these questions once for all through such reason and logic as I can compass.

Well, I can find a fine wealth of divine truth in this way also, feel very sure of my ground, as far as it goes, and be in no peril from the rebuke old Dr. Parr made to the

frisky young fellow who said to him, "Sir! I will believe nothing I cannot understand."

"Then, sir," the old man answered, "your creed will be the shortest I ever heard of in my life." There may be no danger of this; yet, in the wonderful world of the soul's life, by cleaving to reason alone I may become the man Wordsworth had in his mind, and branded as

> "One to whose smooth-rubbed soul can cling
> No form or feeling, great or small,
> A reasoning, self-sufficing thing,
> An intellectual all-in-all."

Or I may give myself over to an intense and overmastering emotion, in which reason has no place, and make past and future of no account except as food for my fever. Well, emotion, also, has a grand story to tell in our human life and history. It has set the world afire many a time, burnt up the old dead brakes and timbers to let the daylight in, and to make clear spaces for the spring-time of God. Still, emotion is only the southward side, at the best; and when I have this, and nothing more, the chances are that I may burn myself up in my burning. And the pity of it, then, is this: that in the most of us there is not timber enough to make much of a fire. Or do I dream over the untold wealth of worth which is hidden in the heart of the future? God forbid, again say I, that we should cry this down,—this vision of the new heavens and the new earth; but, after all, it is only the westward side of the City of God,—very good and quite essential, but that, and no more.

For I have known those, as you have also, who could find no good in the East or the North or South, who derided the old sacred treasures, who could not or would not reason, and kept far away from the moving emotions which have made this life of ours so fluent and full of grace; but they were rather apt to be of all men wanting when you needed men to stand by the things which must be done right here and

now, or their own dream of the grand great future would never come true. Such men have their place; but, when they care for the westward side alone, it is very much like that of the outermost pioneers in the West, who want to push farther on the moment the smoke of other chimneys shoots a blue thread against the horizon, and so they wear their life out pioneering, and never settle down anywhere. They can unite with no society. They will only be content with the wilderness, and have that to themselves; while, if they could touch this completeness of the city which lieth four square, they might still nourish the westward look, and leave the world vastly more their debtor than they do.

It must be true, then, and no mere presumption, that not one of these essentials of a true faith or a good life can ever be so good and true as the whole. The past holds its divine worth with the future: reason is as the iron bolt, and emotion as the fluent fire which flows and flames all through and all about it to all noble ends; and, so when we admit this truth, we can see how in this domain of the soul's highest life the tendency to take sides and bar out the past or the future, cool and clear reason or fervid emotion, this may be all right, so long as those who are on this side or that hold themselves modestly,— as so many do, thank God, after all,— and find in it the motive power of a noble and true endeavor.

Make this law as true to its meaning and purpose in religion as it is in the arts and in genius, and then it is not hard to see how all these qualities make for the city and commonwealth of God on the earth. The past yields its treasure to the Church and the man on one side, and the future opens its promise to another: here reason may reign supreme, and there emotion; and, while we trust we may grow ever more alike, we can be glad and proud of all the worth which flows from our unlikeness. While allowing that this is the best we can do for ourselves, or the Divine life, so far, can do for us, we can still challenge each other

to bring forth the finest fruits of our diverse endowment, and then match them and compare them, in no narrow or selfish way, but that the Father may be glorified in *all* his sons.

We can see to it that, while we must be, in some measure, of one side, by reason of our nature and limitations, yet, once sure the one or the three we cannot take, do manage to bring out another worth to which we never can attain, then we shall not fret or scold because one will not look forward with us to any fair purpose, or another backward, or because one man insists on feeling his way toward the City of God, and another on seeing it, but try to agree together and esteem each other as four, if we must, and yet as one. · Make our faith and our life so wide and gracious that we can include the soul's history and prophecy, reason and emotion; and, then, be sure of this,— that we are not within the City of God, with its four-square walls and twelve open gates, while as churches, or as men and women, we treat each other with disdain, or stand aloof, and call names, and, when the worst comes to the worst, make our own side a vantage-ground for cannon wherewith to blow breaches into the other three. We can only be worthy our name and place as we try to understand this wonderful diversity among sincere men and women in the religious life we accept in nations and races, and in the world of the arts and the intellect. So, while we may have to allow that three out of four are not of our make or mind, still, remember, the three sides which lie away from the one we love best in the City of God all face true, and the City standeth forever four square.

Has my brother, then, the eastward heart and mind, and the faith which goes backward for the best? Is the past of supreme worth to him,— the sacred books, the saintly lives, the grand traditions, the old and deep roots of the religious life in man? Let me be proud of him and glad for him just as he is, if he bears himself modestly; for he may find treas-

ures in the past I fail to find, and dwell with the patriarchs and prophets in their kingdom. Or does he look with eager eyes only toward the future, trying to see the things not seen as yet, and does he hide his manhood in his peering? Does he live for the future, work for it, and try to make his vision good right here and now? Then he shall have his home by the westward gates; for in this way, also, a very noble worth in the religious life comes to us all. The men of the westward heart and outlook find all the new worlds. Or is he stern and austere, teaching all the truth he cares for through reason and logic, drawing the sternest truth from the ever-flowing fountains of the life of God, but does he still dwell with the indwelling truth and life? Then woe is me, again, if I fail to believe such a man dwelleth in God, and God in him! Call him what we will, he is a worker in the iron of this kingdom; and you will find his forge close by the northern gates. We need him, and we need his bolts and bars; and we must have them. He is all right.

Or is my brother of the southern side a man who steers only by the heart, who cannot reason if he would, or would not if he could, a man of strong emotions, and who still counts these of more worth than all beside? Well, are his emotions set on fire of Heaven? Do they burn with a clear white flame to all divine ends and issues? Then, I say, we need such men, also, and the women to match them, in the City of God. They hold the secret in their heart of the grand and true revivals which wait always for their advent, and preach sermons and pour out prayers over which the world wonders. It may be, after they are dead and gone, as we wonder still over Whitefield's prayers and sermons, and say, "How did they sway men so, and work such wonders?" we might as well ask such questions of the white ashes of good sound hickory. The substance was burnt in their burning, but the world was melted and moulded in the fervent fires.

So the truth stands, as it comes home to me, of the solidarity, shall we say, of the city which stands four square, and points toward our poet's fine conclusion,—

> "All are needed by each one:
> Nothing is fair or good alone."

In that great World's Fair I mentioned for an illustration of my thought, I met a fine old man one day I had known many years before, a good sound Methodist when I was one, and a man who never went to sleep under my preaching; and so I loved him. But I must leave the old mother church because I found I did not belong on that side, and this put a wall of partition between our life and our long-enduring love. I had seen him now and then, but it was only to be aware how the sweet old tie was broken or very sadly frayed. But here I found him, many years after our parting; and for the first time he greeted me like a brother. Would I let him go with me through the great buildings, and show me the treasures, and eat bread with him, and I know not what beside? So we went wandering through the wonder world together, talking of what we saw and of the old days, like two brothers again. He was so proud and glad of the whole wealth of what had come from everywhere, — east, west, north, and south,— glad and proud of them all, and could see, as I did, how each was unique, and all were part and parcel of the splendid completeness. So I mind my good day with my good old friend, and make him stand now for my thought of what we may be and may do in the city which standeth four square. When the true heart is in us all, match the best with the best all round, and be glad for it and proud of it, no matter what may be the label or whence it comes. All truth-seekers, all truth-tellers, all the good, all the sincere, all the true-hearted,— I would include them all in the Holy City of God, and leave nobody out. Good old Richard Baxter, Puritan of the Puritans, used to say he would love to translate the sentence

in the Lord's Prayer, "Let thy kingdom come," and make it read "Let thy commonwealth come," for the sake of this nobler spirit; and so would I, and include all the noble arts, all the faithful endeavors, history, science, philosophy, and whatsoever things beside are true and lovely and of a good report.

We hear the cry going forth far and wide in these days that not creed, but character, must be the standard by which men must be weighed and measured from henceforth; and, with my whole soul, I would say "Amen!" to that cry. And, if we must have our diverse modes of faith or of worship,— and this I take to be inevitable,— the question, then will be, "What sort of men do you raise there, and women? Noble or mean, sweet or bitter, full of charity or stricken with bigotry, Christ-like or self-seeking, loving the light or the shadow best, no matter on what side we may dwell in the City of God?" And then, when men say to me, "What is religion?" I will answer bravely and truly with the grand old Scotchman: —

"I will tell you what I think it is,—
Not blindly to disdain thy reason
Or to crouch and lay thee flat
Before a something terrible unknown;
Not bound with bristling fence of man-made creeds,
To thunder banns from thy presumptuous throne
Or bring God down, and make his will thine own;
But in his face with reverent love to look
Here where it shines, in sky and land and sea;
And where the prophets spake in Holy Book,
To hear his word, and take the truth to thee,
And hold it fast, and tread earth's lowly sod
With open heart as one who walks with God."

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ONENESS WITH GOD.

PRAYER.

O THOU God of truth, Thou alone art real amid the unrealities that fill the earth. Thy constancy changes not, though the relations of life change. Wonderful is Thy power out of which this creation has sprung, Thy power which filleth every atom of us. Almighty God, art Thou not the life of all? What is this life which we have, which we love, which we did not make, which we cannot unmake? What is this life that filleth every cell of the mind, every impulse of the soul? Behold we live in Thee. Thou livest in us. Grant that we may live unto Thee. Grant that all these powers which Thou dost give us on trust may be consecrated to Thy service and glory; and when this framework of flesh, like an old garment, is cast aside, make us all like sparks, living and glowing in Thee. Thou all-seeing Witness, every deed of every man Thou beholdest, though no one can behold Thee. Every word of every mouth Thou dost hear, though Thy voice we cannot or will not hear. Before our mind hath taken shape in thought and our wish had uttered itself in speech, Thou dost watch the very sources of thought and intention from within. What secret shall we keep? Into what darkness shall we flee? We therefore would look up to Thee, wait for Thy light, wait for Thy voice in the soul, wait for Thy judgment. Thou art infinite, eternal. Even if our voice was as great as that of the thunder, could we utter speech that would measure the greatness of Thy being? Even if our hearts were as deep and immeasurable as the sea, could we set a limit to the depth of Thy nature?

All nations at all times have praised Thee; but who has been able to utter in full who Thou art, where Thou art, what Thou art? The sun, the great sun, hath its course marked out for it. The great ocean hath its bounds which it cannot go beyond. But Thou art beyond all, higher than all, deeper than all, without time, without beginning, without end. Yet Thy awful majesty, so great, is softened in such personal love for us, for our protection, that men have agreed to call Thee their Father. Thou begettest none. Thou art father to no one, yet from Thy fatherly love all the fathers and all the mothers of the world are. Thou dost kindle the golden lamp of love in every household. Thy guardianship doth cover man and beast. Thy hand feedeth them. Thou waterest the grass, and doth bless Thy beloved.

Soon are the loves of this world ended, and we forsake one another, we forget one another; but whom doth Thou ever forsake, or to whom art Thou indifferent? Best of friends, best of parents, best of all in this earth, Thou art glory above glory. Thy love, as our love, doth not blind Thee to imperfections, but through all unholiness Thy holiness goeth as a burning flame. The great conquerors of the world tremble before the awful majesty of Thy righteousness. The greatest saints bend their heads and weep in confession of sins. Yet the greatest sinner, the fallen soul, dost Thou raise by Thy sympathy, and givest him a place in Thy holy sanctuary. We know no other Saviour but Thee. We confess our sins to no one but Thee. None can sanctify us but Thy Holy Spirit; and, when the blessedness of Thy presence fillest us, our sorrows are forgotten. When Thou hast sanctified us, the profoundest peace fills our spirit. What great joy hast Thou spread over the world with a bountiful hand! What wonderful peace hast Thou given to the wings of the morning! What benedictions dost Thou shed from the kindled skies of evening-tide! Thou art the source of all beauty, the foundation of all glory; yet no joy or blessedness is like unto that which we

feel when our souls are at peace with Thee. We came unto this earth with the consolation of Thy blessed peace; and we pray that, when we depart and others shall cry for us, we may smile with Thy smile, and enter into the abodes of Thy unspeakable joy. Thou art the One who is always the same. None can stand before Thy presence. Above all kings is Thy majesty, above all holiness is Thy holiness, above the heavens is Thy sanctuary. Thou art One. O our Father, O our Saviour, O our Friend, our Joy, we bow before Thee in the love and the lowliness of Thy peace.

And now for a minute let every sound cease, let even the language of worship be hushed, and in perfect silence let us commune with Him who is ever silent.

God is in the soul: the soul is still. Say farewell to all your senses, farewell to all your love in the world, and for a moment let us abide in silence with God.

From untruth lead us to Thy truth; from darkness, O Spirit, lead us to Thy light; from death, O Eternal, lead us to Thy eternal life. Thou awful One, let Thy countenance shine upon us in love, and do Thou keep us from all harm and from all danger. Peace! Peace! Peace!

SERMON.

When the greatest of men — yes, the divine man — claimed that he and his Father were one, did he make the claim for himself alone, or did he make it for all men and women? Because, if Christ and God were one, and we were aliens forever, it would avail us nothing that he came to the world. But, if he and the Father were one in order that we and the Father might be one also, his coming to the world availeth infinitely.

It is singular that every religion puts forth some theory of bridging the immeasurable gulf that yawns between God and man. I come from a land of many religions, many gods, many goddesses, many philosophies, many scriptures, many leaders and prophets; and I can assure you that in that far-off land of mine every one of these scriptures and creeds, and prophets and philosophies, professes to establish a oneness between man's spirit and God's spirit. Whether this oneness is through the intellect alone,— for all philosophy, if it is true to its purpose, aims after the unity of all life, the unity of God and man,— or whether the unity be the result of the emotions of the soul,— and here I will say that all true poetry, the truest and deepest poetry, is nothing but the union of man's sense of beauty with God's soul of beauty; whether, then, it be the unity of the mind of man and the mind of God, or the unity of the love of man and the love of God, or the unity of the motive of man and the motive of God, or the unity of the acts of man and the acts of God,— whatever be the nature or the extent or the kind of this unity,— the aim of all religions is to establish the unity of man's spirit with God's spirit. And therefore there is no great religion in which you do not come across some of the profoundest utterances and ex-

periences. For whether it be the mind that speaks through its thoughts, or the heart that speaks through its feelings, or the conscience that speaks through its impulses, it is man and God speaking together; and when man speaks and God responds, when man prays and God answers, both the utterance and the responses make a wonderful language, the echoes of which more or less fill the great religions of the world.

But the intellect is often prone to go astray, and the heart's emotions often go beyond the laws of right and wrong, and conscience is often a tyrant that goads the harassed soul to deeds which are cruel and unnatural; and too much action, even in the so-called service of God, oftentimes leadeth not to freedom, but to bondage. It is necessary, therefore, whether the man through his intellect seeketh union, or through his heart seeketh rest, or through his conscience seeketh reconciliation,— it is of the utmost necessity that God should appoint a path, should establish a balance, should give unto us a revelation by which the soul's union with his soul may keep us to the paths of everlasting truth and progress.

I maintain that the teaching and the character and the life and the death of Jesus Christ did establish that balance, did lay down that revelation, and did mark out that path through which religion has progressed for two thousand years; and no one knows for how many thousands of years it has yet to go forward.

Now I do not call myself a Christian. I do not call myself a Unitarian. I told them in Boston the other day that, if Christ was alive to-day, in the sense that Christians call themselves by that name, Christ could not be himself a Christian.

Christianity is theology; it is creed; it is a sacrifice; it is an imperialism; it is a rite. I will not characterize it any further.

I call myself and all true men, not Christians, but Christ-

men; men who, having little to do with all these various wanderings of two thousand years, feel and see the union of soul, the union of life, the union of spirit with God in Christ, the Son of God. This is the truest revelation of God to man through the Christian dispensation.

The equilibrium of the spirit that the Son of God had established is the balance of mind and emotion, and motive and conscience, and freedom and submission. What is the mind of God about man? The Infinite Mind cannot be fathomed by the finite. The Transcendent, Eternal, cannot be brought within the limits of our thought; but his purpose toward men, his mind about men, his thought about the relations between man and himself,— all this certainly he had revealed, through God-like men, in all ages. And no one hath revealed it more fully, more effectively, and more truly than Christ Jesus, the Son of God.

What then, in short, is God's purpose? The purpose of God toward man is this: that every man and woman should be a child of God in the sense that Christ was the child of God. In Hindu sacred books they say that the son is nothing more than the father reborn, the son's flesh is the father's flesh, the son's nature is the father's nature. The law of heredity in this country is nowhere more fully established than in the Hindu doctrine of the rebirth of every father in the form of his son.

And if that law of heredity were spiritualized, and if we said that the spirit of every man and woman was the heavenly parent's spirit reborn, every child's birth is the birth of God in man, I do not think we could better state the religion of Christ. But the flesh grows wild, the blood rages in the fever of passion. Nature often degenerates, and tends to go below the spirit in us; and man often becomes a brute beast, an animal, an evil spirit.

You have heard of the doctrine of transmigration,— how a man's soul turns into a cat or a dog or a serpent, etc. There is a substratum of truth in that doctrine,

proved to me from personal experience; for I have seen many a dog and wolf and serpent in men and women.

The great problems before every religion is how to reclaim, refine, elevate, and beautify this degenerate animal into the sonship of God. Every religion professes to impart soul-culture; and in the Christian religion there are many forms of this culture, into the details of which I will not go now. I have told you what is God's purpose toward man. What is the heart of God? He reveals unto us the very heart, the very core and marrow of his impulse of his love. Again I say, the transcendent, eternal Being cannot be bounded or measured by the feeling or the rhetoric or the sense of beauty in any man; but yet God has revealed to us his sympathy. I say, God's heart is revealed, God's deep impulse is revealed, by his Son Christ Jesus.

If you say that the Divine Being sympathizes with our sorrow, by sympathy you mean a remote sentiment, a far-off relationship which is difficult to realize. To my mind it is the closest and the most intimate feeling of God. In the sense that the friend feels for the friend, God feels for man. In the sense that the mother weeps by the bedside of her ailing and dying child, God grieves and weeps by the bedside of every poor, prostrate, dying sinner. The best men and women weep, they groan, they wail, not for their own benefit, but for the benefit of those in whom they have no worldly interest. The highest and holiest men are those who weep for man as man, not because the man is the child of a brother or a friend or an intimate relation, but because man is the child of God. The physician keepeth up night after night by the bedside of the patient. The public man watches all day and all night for the well-being of his fellow-men. The greatest height of goodness that a man can reach is the vicarious suffering which human beings are willing and able to offer for others.

And do you mean to say that God hath given this impulse of unselfish sorrow and watchfulness and sympathy to

man, and hath hardened his own spirit into the barren rocks of the desert, and beholds in his selfishness men laboring, groaning, and dying in silence? Such a God would cease to be human, not to say divine. Such a God no one can worship. All prayer loses its meaning, all aspiration loses its warmth, all worship becomes cold and lifeless and unreal, if response does not come from above to the cry that goeth from below. All religion becomes a farce, it is a slavery, if God will not come down in sympathy to those who suffer in loneliness, to those who cry in pain, in compassion to those who are stricken, and in blessing to those who bless when they are cursed. Revelations there have been in all religions, some more tender and emotional, some less; but no one hath revealed so profoundly the very centre of God's heart, his personal feeling, his personal impulse, and his companionship as Jesus Christ has revealed in his own character.

I would speak to you a long time, but I will not now.

The greatest thing in man is his moral character. If intellectual men are immoral, what is their philosophy? If poets and men with a strong perception of beauty are immoral,— as so many of them have been,— what is the benefit of their sentimentality? It is purity of conscience that giveth wings to an inspired thought; it is the holiness of the mind that deepens the emotions of the heart. Religion is holiness: righteousness exalteth a man as well as a nation.

In all countries, I have told you, there are grand utterances about God, and there are aspirations after beauty. But it is a singular thing that the religion of Christ hath furnished motives for moral character which, with all their erratic teachings, the Christian churches have adopted. No religion enforces moral character so effectually as the religion of Christ. Christ was above all things a sinless soul, a holy being, a sanctified soul; and he sanctified himself, not for his own salvation, not for his own peculiar advantage. He sanctified himself for others. He sanctified himself that

we might be sacred. He showed his holiness of example that our sins might be purged off, and we might become pure as he was pure. Thus in sonship, in the love of man, in the beauty of character, in the balance between the greatest faculties of man's nature, the example of Christ among men stands supreme, and oneness with God is thus effected,

There can be no oneness with God without oneness with man, and the test of Christ and his Father being one is in the fact that Christ and all men and women have become or are going to be one. Union with God is often a selfish aspiration. Union with God is then proved true when union with man is a reality. Christ's mode of being one with other men was his love for them. In these days, so many hundreds of years after, men want to do good to men through the agency of swords and gunpowder. They want to conquer, to defeat, to slay, to break nations to their yokes. Have they been able to do so? Conquest has its advantages and its disadvantages. We know that very well, because we are a conquered people. England's conquest of India has brought innumerable benefits to us; and you might say the same thing of Russia's rule of Central Asia. Russia has given to Tartary and the Mongolian Empire more civilization, more knowledge, than these countries before possessed. But where is the oneness of heart? where is the soul's union? where is the brotherhood between man and man? We know the Boers' weaknesses. Within a day, and perhaps even now, the country of the Boer will be at the feet of the British. But will the Boers and the British feel as brothers after the conquest more than they felt before? And the Americans and the Filipinos? That is the question which religious men must answer. First conquer the soul by love, subdue meanness, the most fallen soul, and then unite it to the highest, the noblest, the most pure love of God. That is how Christ dealt with men.

Let great nations go out to those that are not great, let

superior peoples rule over the inferior peoples; but let all the rule be through Christ's love, through Christ's sympathy, through that wonderful relation which he established between God and man.

The unity after which nations sigh, therefore, is the unity of the soul with the soul, the union of the Son with the Father, and the union of the man with the man, in the spirit of Christ.

O great and glorious Spirit, shall we be aliens from Thee forever? Shall this feeling of estrangement in us forever trouble us and make us sore? We pray to Thee, reconcile us to Thyself. So change our minds that our thoughts may make the grandest and sweetest music with Thy voice. So fill us that we may learn to love as Thou lovest, always, all things; that we may love with the purity which is at the bottom of Thy love; that all things may fill us with the sense of the presence of Thy love, of Thy holiness, of Thy fatherliness. We know we are Thy children, yet we know we are far from Thee. We have striven and struggled; and our whole life has been like a wandering, endless pilgrimage. O Father, now take us home to Thyself, and let us abide in the joy of our oneness with Thee, as Christ was one with Thee. Also grant that we may be one with men; that their sins may not make us angry or impatient, but that in forbearance and in forgiveness and in the truest, deepest love we may become one with all men. Make the world Thy household; and, whether we are here or there, grant that we may behold Thy love in all men and become one with Thee and one with them. And to Thee shall be all the praise forever.

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REV. JOHN CUCKSON

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FROM STRENGTH TO STRENGTH.

"They go from strength to strength" — PSALM lxxxiv. 7.

THE most beautiful thing in life is its expansiveness. Existence does not stagnate. Everything is under eternal obligation to go on or to go off, to live or to die, to ascend or descend, to increase or to diminish. There is no standing still, except for rest and recuperation.

> Beneath the calm, within the light
> A hid unruly appetite
> Of swifter life, a surer hope
> Strains every sense to larger scope:
> Impatient to anticipate
> The halting steps of aged fate.

Growth is the hopeful and inspiring feature of all nature. It is assuring to know that there is no possibility of a catastrophe in universal being. Spring is symbolic of life. It is an exultant revelation of perpetuity, and the ever-recurring answer to autumn. Of all seasons it is the most aggressively optimistic. Nothing is so invigorating to sense and soul, so hopeful and encouraging, as the fresh energy of May, which clothes the fields with verdure, and fills the woods and valleys with exuberant vitality. It quickens the pulse to see the white and pink blossoms of the orchards and gardens on their way to ripe and luscious fruit. Winter is robbed of its cheerlessness, when we know that beneath the mould of the garden patch are vigorous shoots, pushing upward to the light, prophets of the full flower and rich fragrance of the summer hours. There is first the blade, then the ear, and, after that, the full corn in the ear. This spiral progress is not a miracle, but an ordinary event. It

is the law and habit of nature, and, as such, is as old as creation. Life is simply doing what it has always done, asserting its victory and everlastingness.

There ought not to be much difficulty in seeing, that in her endless transformations, Nature is yearly explaining to us the great parable of all being. The law which prevails in seed and root operates no less certainly and beautifully in the growth of human life. That, too, is subject to the universal law of progress. The soul is a thing of quite infinite possibilities. Imperfection is stamped upon it, but its capacities are unlimited. Potentially, no one can put any bounds upon what it can be, or what it can do. It was obviously made and meant for eternal progress, and is always moving to its goal. The march may be slow, the road thickly strewn with hindrances; but humanity fulfils its destiny, and no man lives in vain.

This is the thought contained in the Psalmist's words,—the idea that all the stages of growth in mind, morals, and religion, in the life of the individual and the collective life of humanity, are stepping-stones to higher things, points of attainment and points of departure, on that ladder which Jacob saw in a dream, but which we see in sober reality. We are quick enough to admit this in one direction or another, as it happens to suit our mood; but we are slow to perceive that it prevails everywhere and in all things.

How true it is of man's intellectual life! The histories of philosophy, science, theology, are records of steady, persistent growth. One school of thought closes, and another opens. The science of one age becomes the abandoned illusion of the next. The march of faith is over the gravestones of forgotten gods. No great truth is ever allowed to perish from the earth. It may be obscured for a while, may appear and reappear in ever-changing phases; but there is no eclipse.

> "One accent of the Holy Ghost
> The heedless world hath never lost."

The same cannot be said of error. There is no guarantee of its perpetuity. The false and inadequate forms of truth, which took shape in an age of ignorance and inexperience, fulfil their purpose, and slowly perish when that purpose is realized. They are beneficent and beautiful as the visions of childhood while they last; but just as soon as men begin to exhaust them, and see beyond them, then they fall like the leaves of autumn, pushed off the tree of knowledge by the expanding buds which come to take their place. It is not necessary to pluck them. They will drop of their own accord when they are ready, and not before. If left alone, they will die of sheer inanition; and, do what we will, it is futile to attempt to destroy them before they are ripe for falling, and while there is any vitality left in them. The only effective method of hastening their decay is by the creation of a stronger, intellectual life, with more vigorous truth, which will do their work better and more completely, and leave them no excuse for lingering. It is in this way that philosophies, creeds, customs, have become effete, and have lost their hold upon human intelligence.

And this brings us to the question of the ethics of belief and unbelief, of affirmation and denial, the simple morality of our attitude towards old opinions, which are no longer true to us, and new opinions which, though true, are regarded as unwelcome innovations. The process of transition from creed to creed, from one standpoint of faith to another, is as sacred as it is inevitable. It is in no wise a cruel necessity, but a solemn duty and privilege, which we ignore at our peril. How vain it is to put our minds and consciences through painful processes, in order that we may affect to retain truths and forms which increased knowledge and experience have cancelled! and how immoral it is to resist truths which are proved beyond all doubt, and which are aids and auxiliaries to our higher and more perfect life! Theology, the science of religious belief, is not, as is too generally supposed, a fixed body of revealed

dogma, originally complete, and not amenable to alteration and amendment; but, like every other branch of human knowledge, its truths and principles are cumulative and progressive. Something may be added to them or taken from them, without committing an act of sacrilege. They are all open to expansion or contraction. The history of every religion, whether Hebrew, Pagan, or Christian, is a record of development. Reform has succeeded reform, and revision has followed revision; and nothing but the stubbornest and stupidest of all prejudices has stood in the way of change in religion, as in science and philosophy. The entire road along which mankind has travelled in the search for God is strewn with the wreckage of extinct creeds, once all powerful because once true, but now dead as the mummies which lie buried along the desert of the Nile.

Change is, and ever has been, the symbol of mental and moral progress, and fondness for anything that is no longer true is no protection against its inevitable decay. Christian theology is not exempt from the common fate. Almost before it was fairly launched upon the world the sifting and eliminating process commenced. From the conflict between Paul and Peter, when one withstood the other to the face as to the admission of Gentiles to the privileges of Christianity, down to the latest revision of the Westminster Catechism, it has been subject to repeated modification. Its essential truths have remained; but the forms of thought into which they have been cast, and the language in which they received expression from the lips of succeeding generations, have varied with every age. That which was orthodox in one period became heresy in the next; and doctrines which seemed in every respect imperishable have one by one been cast into the crucible of human thought and experience, and have come out transfigured and vitalized. The teachings of Jesus were not, like the Mosaic law, a sacred deposit shut up in an ark of the covenant, and unchanged through long wanderings, but, like the mustard

seed and leaven, were capable of indefinite growth and expansion. Century after century, now by accretion and then by selection, has assimilated or rejected the opinions which came to it by inheritance, and adapted to its shifting needs the great truths which Jesus and his apostles dropped into the minds of their countrymen. Some of these truths have been distorted beyond all recognition, while others, thrust into the background, are only germinal still, after so many centuries, and the future of Christianity will bring them to light. The conditions under which the latter might be expected to take root and grow are as yet unfavorable, and we must look for their fulfilment in the future unfolding of man's moral and spiritual history.

We are ourselves in the midst of this transitional growth, and it would seem as if the Unitarian Church were privileged to take a very important part in the application of New Testament democracy to the thought and life of the twentieth century. The spirit of the living age, though still fettered by archaic forms of belief and social custom, is the exact opposite of that which stripped primitive Christianity of its simplicity and universality. The teaching of the Early Church, originating in a mind and character singularly unwedded to tradition and conventionalism, was free and democratic. It was pre-eminently liberal and humane, and sprung from a soul dwelling beneath an open sky and amid unsophisticated human fellowships. But the farther it travelled from its source, and the closer became its relation with Gentlle civilizations, the less it was able to resist surrounding corruption. It was not long before its beliefs and institutions were accommodated to the new environment. It entered an atmosphere charged with political and social despotism, and from which it has not yet emerged.

As we look back upon the past, we do not see a single age into which the magnanimity and catholicity of Jesus were capable of easy translation. The moment Christianity passed from Palestine into Rome and Athens, Corinth and

Constantinople, it became wedded to despotic imperialisms utterly alien to the genius of its Founder. The spirit of the Pagan world stole into its faith and robbed it of its liberty and inclusiveness, crept into its polity and transformed the free Gospel of Humanity into imperial dogmatism. No doubt, this was unavoidable. It may have been absolutely indispensable to the great purpose of making Christianity the universal religion.

But these conditions no longer exist. We live in an age and a country saturated with the spirit of Christian democracy. The ambitious project of forming one church with power to suppress free thought and crush individual rights is an exploded illusion in our generation. Experiment after experiment in this direction has ended in failure after failure, until the churches, by almost universal consent, have given it up. We live at this moment in a diviner air. The spirit of the age has taken on a new complexion. The old types of organized tyranny — social, political, ecclesiastical — are either dead or dying. The forces of modern manhood are arrayed against them, and the time is ripe not so much for a new departure as for a splendid restoration. It has ceased to be meritorious to stifle any form of honest thought in the name of God. Social rights and human justice can no longer be trampled on with impunity. The invincible energies of spiritual manhood have won their liberty. The civilized world waits to rid itself of a vast incubus of superstition, selfishness, and wrong. It is looking with patient hope and expectancy to the time when the religion of Jesus will be in reality what now it is in large measure only in name,— the organization of liberty, truth, and righteousness. And, when the religious history of our own age comes to be written by an impartial historian, it will be found that Dr. Channing, Theodore Parker, and Dr. Martineau, together with the group of Unitarian Christian churches with which their names have been so long and so honorably identified, have played a conspicuous part in

the modern effort to restore and rehabilitate the fundamental truths and principles of the New Testament. Mediæval dogma made Christianity limited in thought and intolerant in sentiment, but these have helped to make it broad and inclusive and universal. They have stood for a spiritual restatement of the religion of Jesus, scholarly, sympathetic, and devout, nobler than any previously existing, truer to the gospel pattern, and more in keeping with the growing intelligence and finer humanities of the age.

The old semi-political and social ideas which Paganism grafted on the Christian Church,— such as the authority of priests, the salvation of the elect, the eternal damnation of the heretical and unprivileged, the superiority of creed over conduct, and the arbitrary favoritism of God through time and eternity,— which are alien to the Christian doctrines of God's universal Fatherhood and man's universal brotherhood, have been displaced by truths and sentiments wholly inimical to the genius of imperial intolerance. Men have gone from truth to truth, and from strength to strength, until the best Christianity in all the Protestant churches is setting itself resolutely against every species of dogmatism and caste feeling and religious prejudice. Persecution, once an ecclesiastical virtue, has become the worst of ecclesiastical vices. Ignorance and passion are no longer the auxiliaries of piety; and good men, who in the old time would have been jealous and resentful towards each other, are now respectful, sympathetic, and brotherly. True Christianity has ceased to bristle with antipathies. The churches, once holding themselves at arm's length, and bitterly rejecting each other's claims, are slowly drawing into closer fellowship and mutual understanding of their respective merits. Difference of opinion, even on the most vital questions of doctrine, is no longer a crime; and thinkers who cannot see eye to eye in theology, any more than in science or philosophy, are taking their stand on immediate truth and not on ancient tradition, on principles not on maxims, on

love not on law. May God keep our eyes on great revelations, on lofty ideals, on sacred principles on noble service, and save us from spiritual blindness, materialistic ambitions, respectable mediocrity, and that dull commonplace in which no true prophet can live, where our young men see no visions and our old men dream no dreams!

Nor is this all. Progressive civilization is something more than a march of intellect. Mankind is not only growing wiser and more liberal, but is becoming juster and more humane. The expansion of thought has its counterpart in the upward trend of morals and manners. This is not quite so obvious, because it is not easy to gauge an undercurrent of ethical life in a community. The good that men and women do is largely unregistered. Crimes are trumpet-tongued, but virtues seldom voice themselves loud enough to reach the public ear. Lying and slander fill the air with their pestiferous miasma. And yet every keen observer of life around him is confident of nothing so much as of the increase of the common regard for fairness, moral courage, and gracious kindness. The coward, the trickster, the knave, we have always with us; but the common conscience is sound, and public virtue rises to great occasions. Humanity grows sweeter and purer. Benevolent institutions multiply. The sick, the poor, the wretched, the sinful, receive more considerate care. Charity knows no bounds. Social caste — which in a great republic is a ridiculous simulacrum — is losing its bitterness; and privileged persons are becoming more and more sensible of their duties and obligations. In all these respects, there is still vast room for improvement, and no one moved by a deep passion for humanity can rest contented with things as they are; but I cannot see how the philosopher, the reformer, the social idealist, can fail to appreciate the upward and onward drift of things in the present age.

The average weight of character in the community accumulates gradually and unawares. We are getting out of the

daily drudgery and discipline of life a power and influence for good which has not previously entered our thought, or the wisdom of our fathers. Ethical culture is not, as is too commonly supposed, lagging behind its companions in the march of the generations. The character of mankind, like everything else, is moving upward and onward. It is not deteriorating while all other things are going forward, but is imperceptibly passing from strength to strength. It never stood for so much as it does at the present day, some signs notwithstanding to the contrary. Think of the men with whom you are personally acquainted, whose characters are immeasurable forces in society and benedictions upon the life around them! They do not always possess brilliant gifts. Their social position may not be conspicuous. They do not render to the world any distinguished services. But they never betray your confidence, or wound your respect, or lower your faith in mankind. They are types of the great mass of men and women who leaven the world with goodness, and are the salt of human society. Their weight of moral influence far exceeds the evil wrought by others, and gives them an enormous power in the community.

And what shall I say of religion? Is that the only thing in these later days which is either marking time or slipping backward? Is there any truth in the too common statement, which one hears on every hand, that the Church is fast becoming obsolete, and that men are trying to live without religion? I do not believe it. Religion is normal and natural to man. It is woven into the very texture of the race. It is as everlasting as the soul. Faith, reverence, obedience, worship, love, which are distinctly religious qualities, are capable of expansion. Men grow on the Godward side of their nature, and become increasingly religious by the cultivation of the spiritual instincts, and in no other way. But, if the agencies and instrumentalities employed to win the soul are antiquated and defective, or if the Church falls into the hands of worldly men who control its affairs,

until it becomes a corporation, and not a temple of the living God; if the minister is forbidden to prophesy, and becomes a mere congregational asset, and church members are absentees renting seats which they never occupy, or even men of no moral standing whatever,— then spiritual life falls to a low condition. The fault, however, even then, lies not in the soul or its environment, but in the ecclesiastical polity and the means and methods of culture. That there are churches whose existence can hardly be justified on moral, to say nothing of spiritual grounds, is no argument against religion itself.

No one can say that our age presents original obstacles to spiritual vitality. The temptations to self-indulgence and indifference to a religious life are neither greater nor more numerous than they have hitherto been. Worldliness and godlessness are not more attractive now than they were centuries ago. The spiritual necessities of mankind are unaltered. Men and women are perplexed or despondent now as they have ever been in all stages of religious history. They hunger and thirst for the things of the spirit as much as they did when Paul preached in the cities of the Gentiles, or Wesley appealed to the Cornish miners. Their interest in religion is not weakened; and, when the privileges of Christian and religious fellowship are offered to them in ways which they understand and appreciate, they readily accept the offer, and fill the churches. The condition of religious organizations at the present day is not necessarily a sign of spiritual decadence. It may, and probably does, spring from other causes incidental to the churches themselves rather than to the ministers or the people upon whom the whole blame is unjustly cast. Here it may be an obsolete and unbelievable theology, there a dead mechanical formality of worship, a thing of spiritless and empty phrases; in this place a malicious and factious spirit, from which goodness and grace shrink with shame, in that, a coarse and merciless commercialism, which seeks its ends

in the church, as it does in the world, with a cold relentlessness.

There are hundreds of reasons why churches do not succeed in our day, apart from the plea that the age is not religious,— a plea easier to urge than to prove. However it may be with ecclesiastical institutions and their management, it can hardly be said that the common people are either hostile to religion or indifferent to its blessings. At least, they are not more so now than at any previous period. It is not wholly their fault, or the fault of their faithful and devoted ministers, that so many of them are like sheep without shepherds, and are forced to seek the enlightenment, the stimulus, the comfort of religion, in unwonted directions and in ways un-ecclesiastical, if they seek them at all. It is my solemn conviction, superficial appearances to the contrary, that mankind is not only passing from strength to strength, but from grace to grace. The religious life is not an exception to the rule of progress, and men are not likely to be laggards in that which is more to them than anything else. Their apprehension of God and their daily need of him is just as keen as ever it was. Their sense of the sacredness of duty, their consecration to ideal things, their vision of immortality, grow with every other kind of growth; and it may be worth the while of the churches to consider to what extent there are obstacles and hindrances, within their own walls, to the free development of the religious disposition. Is the Church sufficiently democratic? Is it free from all the demons which torment men in the outside world, or do devout people find that the ecclesiastical atmosphere is no purer and no better than the secular? Is the fellowship of faith a warm and sympathetic brotherhood, which men and women feel and appreciate, or is it an icy relationship, in which all the divisions and asperities which divide mankind are intensified? Of one thing we may rest assured, the religion that is really magnetic will magnetize on its own account, and without any feverish

effort to develop energy from the outside. It will burn without constant fanning. The vital thing grows and bears fruit in season, and it never occurs to any one to question its destiny.

"To things immortal time can do no wrong,
And that which never can be old forever must be young."

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After a review of the beliefs held in the past concerning life beyond death, Dr. Savage takes up the present conditions of belief, and considers the agnostic reaction from the extreme "other-worldliness" which it replaced, which was in turn followed by the spiritualistic reaction against agnosticism. He points out the doubts concerning the doctrine of immortality held by the churches and the weakness of the traditional creeds and the loosening of their hold upon people. He then considers the probabilities of a future life,— probabilities which, as he admits, fall short of demonstration. The volume includes a consideration of the work of the Society for Psychical Research and also an appendix giving some of the author's own personal experiences in this line. Dr. Savage holds, as a provisional hypothesis, that continued existence is demonstrated, and that there have been at least some well-authenticated communications from persons in the other life. The chief contents of the volume are as follows:

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